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MARIE OF THE HOUSE D'ANTERS

MICHAEL EARLS

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Roman
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p. 126 Emma Goldman

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Marie arrives at d'Anters.—*Page 294*

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MARIE OF THE HOUSE D'ANTERS

By

MICHAEL EARLS, S.J.

NEW YORK CINCINNATI CHICAGO
BENZIGER BROTHERS
PUBLISHERS OF BENZIGER'S MAGAZINE
1916

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TO

CHARLES B. STALEY

where

"The clustered spires of Frederick stand,
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland."

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Chateau d'Anters . . .	9
II.	How the House Began . . .	24
III.	An Author Comes	45
IV.	A Mysterious Letter . . .	73
V.	Harry Crawford's Book . . .	96
VI.	The Young Socialists . . .	117
VII.	The Prophecy	153
VIII.	The Jew's Answer	185
IX.	Christmas Passes	221
X.	The Letter	255
XI.	Marie at d'Anters	285
XII.	The Letter Disappears . . .	316
XIII.	The Courtyard of the Prince de Condé	347
XIV.	The Mortons	379
XV.	No Fête Champêtre	416

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Marie of the House d'Anters

CHAPTER I

THE CHATEAU D'ANTERS

I

THE old coach-road that wanders away from Paris out through the Porte de Versailles seems lost when it reaches the crooked, cobbled streets of Issy. It loses itself again amid the narrow thoroughfares of Clamart until it catches sight of pleasant uplands beyond Bellevue; and then, like a horse that recognizes a homeward stretch, the road shakes off the hesitancy that accompanied it through the little towns, swings smartly into long, easy strides, and pushes ahead with apparent delight toward Versailles.

One of the pretty villages along the course is Claireville, made up, as a transient spectator may judge, of about twenty houses and shops packed close together about the *place de l'église*. Farther back from the road some scattered houses may be discerned in among the pleasant woodlands; little flower-gardens with their neatly trimmed hedges in symmetrical lines look up over the walls to the elevated square before the church, like colored pages out of a picture-book. On the crest

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of a hill to the left stands a convent, a plain, square building, with deep, silent windows; and silent, too, are the shining paths of white sand which stand across the garden. And almost directly opposite, on what is called "the twin hill," is the Chateau d'Anters.

Tall, dark trees and dense shrubberies conceal all but a few windows and one tower of the Chateau. Seclusiveness seems to lurk amid the quiet, shaded spaces in the large area about the great house: the high, winding walls, covered with cement, are stern in silence; the windows that chance to be seen through the heavy trees appear very solemn; and the air itself is as tranquil and voiceless as the heart of a deep forest on a sultry summer day.

But this impression of somber solitude may be obtained only on certain days of the week; one of them is not Sunday. If you chanced to be passing through the little village of Claireville during any week-end you would imagine that a caravan was at the Chateau, under some motto such as "Live and be merry, for to-morrow we die." The windows of the Chateau ring out with merry voices; the trees seem to laugh in the great choruses of merriment; and the towers look down to the road over the walls with a jaunty invitation for every passer-by to come in. On such days the residents of the village find interest in watching the visitors come and go. Every strange

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individual is put down as going up to "the big house," as the Claireville people always termed the Chateau. Often, too, they spoke of it in the phrase, "Up there where those Americans live."

"Those Americans" were the d'Anters, a jovial, hospitable family with a very comfortable fortune, which they, in the manner of good Americans, continued to increase and multiply nearly every day of the week. On holidays and week-ends they took time to enjoy to their hearts' content their titles and medals, giving merry moods of pleasure, through their large hospitality and incongruous pretensions, to the numerous visitors who assembled there at the beck and nod of Madame la Marquise.

Americans in their alert business instincts and their financial successes, they were not altogether un-American in their social ostentations. Everybody knows that the so-called "upper set" in the United States is a fierce champion of class distinction, and constantly insists upon chattering about its "circle" and "the family." Let them have their sentiment. Such things shall be till the end of time, while fortunes may be made. When a man is rich, then comes, as if by a law of worldly life, a thirst for honors. There it is in a brief sentence; why talk more about it? And, moreover, two-thirds of American fiction is concerned with it.

The family d'Anters, which started as Mr. and

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Mrs. Ben Harrington in Jersey City, was typically American. They amassed money, and then proceeded to win their social spurs. But let it be understood that they did not obtain their pompous titles by giving or being given in foolish marriages. For them no bonnie Prince Charlie came over the heather to favor them; nor were they at hand at the downfall of some little principality in the east of Europe, ready with their money to prop up a wasted house, and thereupon be awarded a place by patent in some musty peerage. Yet the Harringtons, dear old Ben, and dearer Susie of loquacious energy, managed to crown their European successes with a title; and they had money enough to purchase a splendid country-house in the country between Paris and Versailles. The d'Anters, however, were not to lose their hearts and heads because of a coat-of-arms, even though, to many who became acquainted with them superficially, they appeared to be ludicrous to the extreme, and veritable puppets with vulgar pretence. They who knew the family better were truer in judgment of them. Old Ben Harrington had long ago learned that "a man's a man for a' that," and dear Susie repeatedly lectured her children that they, despite the titles and the father's money, should turn to useful work when the time came. She had a score of quotations to embellish her more serious talks; and touching upon the dignity of labor, she

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so frequently employed a sonnet by Elizabeth Barrett Browning that the children had eight lines of it by heart. And evidently she took seriously a pun in Shakespeare, when she said, "Work has been honorable in noble families from the first. Remember what our great poet says—'Adam was the first man to bear arms.'"

And so the d'Anters dwelt in the sunlight of their high-sounding titles with much pleasantry. They played at nobility, laughingly in their healthy hearts, though externally they carried on their play with sober seriousness, as unmistakably determined on it all as their Yankee compatriots are during the proceedings upon the floor of a stock exchange. Yet the great airs attendant upon them during the jolly visits to the Chateau did not freeze up their hospitable hearts. Madame looked very little like a titled personage or a "lady of quality," as she departed from Paris on Friday afternoon, her arms laden with bundles of various sizes and contents. These, her right hand as well as her left hand knew, were for the good nuns in the little convent at Claireville. Madame and her guests were going to enjoy the days at the country-house; but she would begin every week-end by doing some act of charity for the nuns.

"The dear, heavenly little things," she would call them; "they can not come over to our worldly poppycock. How happy they are!" And

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Madame la Marquise meant it, too, in her heart of hearts.

She always went straight to the convent on those Friday visits to Claireville, her arms around the bundles, and a maid by her side with a well-filled pannier. Young and old along the street and the lane leading to the convent bowed, and saluted with pleasant words the charitable and generous Madame. Her kindness to the poor nuns bespoke her the kindly thoughts and wishes of the entire village.

"And these little things, dear Mother," she would say in a quiet tone, which was not hers during the sojourn at the Chateau, "these little things," pointing to her parcels, "will not keep over Sunday. So please don't hold them over in the hope that some wayfarer will be along next week." It was her way of hinting that she wanted the nuns to partake of the dainties. Well she knew that the poor who came to the convent gate would receive the best that was in the cupboard.

And this weekly ceremony at the convent being done, Madame la Marquise proceeded to the "big house" to rule over the ceremonies that were to take place there. Wayfarers, of a kind different from those who seek refreshment at the convent, would appear at the Chateau; and whether the house d'Anters wrote a page in any blue-book of peerage or not, it could lay claim to a

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whole chapter in the book of Good Fellowship; that it had given cordial and lavish entertainment to many a descendant of Sem, Cham, and Japheth: through some notable representatives of their races, Caucasian, Mongolian, and Ethiopic, had all partaken of the camaraderie of the Chateau.

II

To obtain admission there for one or a dozen of its *jours de fête,* it was not enough to stand timidly knocking at the gate; a little assertiveness was necessary; yet a bold intruder, however pompous he appeared to be, would be sent marching down the street. Your first requisite was to find somebody to stand sponsor for you; and that was not far to seek. If you chanced to know somebody who knew somebody else who knew the d'Anters—that was an excellent start. Then, if Madame was acquainted with your wish to pay your respects at the Chateau, you were sure to receive an invitation, bold and surprising, as it might appear to you. If your address was not known to the d'Anters, somebody along the frequented routes of Europe would meet you and give you the informal message. If a letter could find you somewhere between the Strand and the Pincian Hill, you might expect by any mail to receive the quick summons, under the emblazonment of the Chateau d'Anters, telling you very

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succinctly, and leaving you to surmise the rest, that *M. le Marquis* and *Mme. la Marquise* would be at Claireville every Sunday.

A first glance at the coat-of-arms might intimidate you—probably make you cautious about accepting the invitation. The design seemed to be a large ground-nest with a huge cobra-de-capello raising its frightful head. Looking closer, you would discern that the cobra's head was all but severed from the body—danger was nil. And in the upper corners you might make out, on the left, an English pheasant moving toward an axe and block on the right—a good dinner was going to be made ready. Forget the cobra, and come in to the dinner; perhaps that was the legend intended by d'Anters. Whatever it was, and though many a curious smile may have been cast at the "arms," people who came perhaps to scoff often returned to dine again at the generous board.

III

Whether the d'Anters received their name and the privilege of their title from French or Italian hands was a question often thought upon but little discussed by the heterogeneous groups that assembled at the Chateau. Americans for the greatest part, these visitors possessed little or no knowledge of matters pertaining to genealogy and heraldry. They had succeeded in the finan-

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cial world and found a place in American "society" without any interest in these topics; theirs was the hegemony of the dollar and a-plenty of them. At home, in the land of the free, they had seen military men who wore epaulettes and gold spangles; and in Europe they were likely to be impressed as much by an officious majordomo as by a Duke "of high degree." Americans, therefore, who went to Claireville to be interested by the Marquis or the Marquise looked upon the grotesque fairyland with eyes of wonder, and departed quite out of breath in the Monday rush back to Paris.

The few Europeans who occasionally visited d'Anters, though interested and skilled in questions of peerage, did not bother their heads about the origin of this family. When and where and how it came upon its titles did not trouble them. If one of them undertook to go so far as to venture a surmise upon the point, he might say that the present house d'Anters was not older than the Third Napoleon. There, let it go at that, intimated the shrug of the shoulders. Who cares a fig for a house so young as that!

The Marquis and his better half (as the trite phrase says it, though Madame was more than that in the house d'Anters) never invited anybody to listen to a history of the family. The Marquis, in no conversation of the thousands that took place at Claireville, ever came within hail-

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ing distance of the subject. Madame also kept clear of any query upon the matter, though it is quite certain that she could give a curt answer to any person so temerarious as to institute an inquiry about the history of the family d'Anters. People, at least in Madame's presence, kept clear of the topic as if by instinct; the Chateau never came down upon their heads for indiscretions in genealogical investigations. Moreover, the Marquise always had a thousand other subjects for talk; and when her tongue was not busy, her feet and hands were—like the man in the biography who was never without a cigar except when he had a pipe. Her gesticulations, with a thousand orders to the servants, gave her at times the appearance of an animated windmill. Her imperative instructions rang through the halls and up and down stairs almost incessantly; her vivacious chatter to all who happened to be within speaking distance at any hour of the week-end parties was appalling, considered merely from the viewpoint of physical energy; and her hilarious laughter was perhaps the most strenuous exercise that she indulged in, with the exception of her pilgrimage on Friday evening to the little convent, when she went afoot over the valley and up the hill, laden with packages for the nuns. If energy and motion were the only requisites for good health, Madame ought to live for a hundred years, before she collapses like the "one-hoss

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shay." Seated at the huge table in the great dining-room, she exhibited tireless arms by the manner with which she incessantly "helped" the visitors to "more." And in the great salon—great in its ability to receive over a hundred guests with ease—she appeared to count no evening successful if she had not tramped over every inch of its area and sat for a minute upon every vacant chair.

IV

The family d'Anters, therefore, as far as the motley galaxy of visitors knew, may have had traditions that were only of yesterday; but it had a roseate, even if bizarre, to-day, and it was proceeding sumptuously, and not without promise, to a to-morrow of story, if not of history. The When and Whence of this family were lost in the present passing gala-day. It was a remarkable house—everybody agreed upon that. Remarkable is the very epithet the guests put upon it; and multiform were the intonations employed to pronounce the word. Several women, with the genius of their kind, could say it in an absolutely colorless tone, leaving a sharp ear to wonder whether they had spoken it in praise or ridicule. And one kindly old man who brought an air of healthy wheat from his fields in Kansas, being almost stupefied with what he considered the atmosphere of genuine royalty, was wont to

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accent the first syllable of the word with staccato emphasis, and then, as if to make honorable amend for the undue stress, he would repeat the other syllables in a tapering diminuendo, "Remarkable—markable."

Yet it must not be understood that the Chateau was merely a caravan of noise by day and revelry by night. Despite the external brusqueness of Madame la Marquise, she was thoroughly good at heart, and not without many parts of rich sensibilities, which, as time went on, enlarged the respect and love of a world of friends. She was full of the joy of life of her own kind; and if during two days of every week she set around the Chateau a flashy halo, she was too sane to see it through a sickly mist of sentimentality and snobbishness; and her constant round of matinees and soirées, howsoever bizarre they appeared in earlier years, both in matter and form, were devoid of the skeletons and shadows that lurk and hover about other gatherings of a society more refined on the surface.

Denizens of all antipodes met there. Quacks in art, gawkishly dressed parvenus, men of a little prominence in diplomatic circles, or small leaders in some department of trade; and travelers whose ancestors had gone to America neither in the *Mayflower* nor the *Ark and Dove*, and who now had come to Europe to stand in open-mouthed wonder at the picturesque and his-

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toric places where money could take them—all were there (a large catalogue of unimportant names) who had found a pass-key to the Chateau, to the lively salon and the spacious *salle-à-manger*. Grace would be said, as the wondering spectators stood tentatively about; a little reading out of a religious book would follow; and then at a signal the assembly sat down, to a clatter of chairs and voices like the fanfare at the opening of a minstrel-show, when the protagonist calls out, "Gentlemen, be seated."

But beyond these accompaniments of noise, and perhaps the loud-voiced airs of pretentious ceremony, the Chateau was a healthy place physically and morally; remembering, of course, that the serpent found a way even into the garden of Eden. The d'Anters kept it from making any overt entrance to their Chateau. Public offenders against any of the Ten Commandments were ostracized; stern above all was the law that no divorced man or woman should ever receive a gracious note under the d'Anters' coat-of-arms. There were a few solid realities in ethics and religion, and these had to be venerated. Madame was sane and determined on that point. Free-thinking and free-living were countenanced and encouraged, if they kept within the large, sacred boundaries of truth and morality. The house could swing to the music of hilarity and grotesque etiquette, which was, after all, recog-

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nized as make-believe; but the healthy atmosphere of a few great virtues was to swing with it. No young woman ever came there without a chaperone; Madame took care to provide one if the girl was at school in Paris, or traveling with a group of sightseers; and Madame herself more than once returned to town with a young visitor on Monday morning. Children may have been surprised at many of the unusual eccentricities—as when they saw the Madame light a cigarette, toward the close of dinner, or again in the dim light of the Turkish room, when they assembled to hear fascinating stories, or see marvelous performers in sleight-of-hand; but their moral susceptibilities were never given occasion to be shocked. The vivid whirl of activity and the splendor of the scenes appeared to them as a fairyland realized. Love at sight may often have happened there between those who were capable of being so disturbed, but there are no records to tell whether these sudden incursions into the realms of sweetheart felicity were forerunners of satisfactory and far-off consequences.

When Marie Ruhlman and Harry Crawford were received there, in what was perhaps the quietest year of the Chateau's picturesque éclat, they had already become acquainted, and to be, in the words of that hackneyed phrase, "interested in one another." On a beautiful day in spring it would be no matter for surprise if

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Harry Crawford, walking out the road toward Versailles, should fulfil in his own regard that line of Tennyson's, "In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love." Others before him had encountered the experience, and, when detected, had been saluted by the Madame's tireless phrase, "For heaven's sake."

And Marie Ruhlman, during her sojourn in the environs of Paris, while interested in the work of a young writer, who was Harry Crawford, was to find greater problems for her deeper thoughts. In time, perhaps, she would have to forget Harry Crawford entirely. What would be his own thoughts when he should learn that she could speak not of father and mother, that she was a waif upon the world, the ward only of an opulent Jew? Whither would she turn when he discovered that she was not the niece of the wealthy Mr. I. Ruhlman? Such had she been in all her memories. But through her fortunate acquaintance—shall we call it fortunate?—with the generous hostess at Claireville, she came to discover that her father deserved no loving memory, and that she was nearer to her mother than she had ever been during the past nineteen years.

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CHAPTER II

HOW THE HOUSE BEGAN

I

MR. BEN HARRINGTON, who was now the Marquis d'Anters, had an uneventful youth in a little hamlet on the Potomac. His wealth in stock, like that of many a young American, consisted of good health and a determination to do something more lucrative than walking about cornfields. His hands kept reaching out, and his feet went shrewdly over every new ground. At nineteen years of age he was mixing medicinal stuffs in an apothecary's shop in New Jersey, and growing rich, at least in observations and hope. Remember, too, that he was dwelling now in New Jersey, a State which gives young people the itch for a front place in every march. It pushed Ben Harrington up the line. In a few years, when he came to marry Susan Glynn, who likewise had New Jersey's pushiness in her blood, Ben possessed something like a little fortune; he wed also to his money and his medical adroitness Susan's nine thousand and eighty-five dollars, and a piece of property in a downtown district. Here, then, was an excellent American start for him or any other

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aspiring young man. That was how Susie felt about it, and she dwelt upon that point several times in conversation.

Young Mrs. Harrington was to be another Lady Macbeth, only much better in her adoption of means to success. She would be a dynamic force to give Ben greater speed toward their zenith; but Susan Glynn Harrington would have no stain of blood upon her hands. And she would retain a heart able to lift to laughter always. Ben would likewise be a Macbeth in ambition, but not one to parley with witches, or pass sleepless nights, or be unable to say "Amen," when others said, "God bless us."

When they went to Europe on an excursion, two years after the marriage, Ben was quick to discover a brilliant prospect for his thrift and ingenuity in the cities which they visited; and Susan was quicker to conclude that, besides the easy possibility of wealth at their hands, she would in time find in one of the great capitals of the continent larger opportunity for "hobnobbing with the big ones," as she undisguisedly expressed it. London was not to be their Mecca; for with a woman's instinct, "Mrs. H.," as Ben constantly called her previously to the assumption of the titles, surmised that too many of their kind were already ahead of them in England. Paris, too, contained a large colony of aspiring Americans, but it still offered opportunities for

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adventurous spirits, such as the Harringtons. The Parisian outlook did not need to appear before their eyes a second time. When the knock of fortune came to their hotel door, doubtful and timid though it seemed to the husband, Susan arose with bristling alacrity, and gave her unhesitating answer to its first summons.

"Order your medicines over by the very next boat," she said directly, and with a tone of finality, to Ben: "I'll attend to the advertising in the meantime."

"But you—why you, my dear Susan—you hardly know enough French so soon," he replied in a tentative tone of protest.

A look from dear Susan, even though it showed only a moiety of the indignation of which she was capable when thoroughly aroused, was more than sufficient to silence him, and win, moreover, an acquiescing nod from him. Nevertheless, she condescended to add a verbal reply, "But there are plenty of people who have the skill to use French *à l'Americain,* and I"—she paused to bow and wink and make a gesture, which had the stilted ictus of a circus performer—"I will teach them how to make their academic French serve an American enterprise."

"Have your way, my dear, have your way," said Ben readily.

Yet the suddenness of this radical scheme—the breaking away from the office and work in New

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Jersey, the possibility of failure howsoever roseate was the prospect of a new dawn, the severance from former associations, the adoption of new maneuvres in more conservative lands—these and a score of other causes for doubt made him stand like a statue.

Susan very promptly set him in motion. "Have you ordered the medicines yet?" she asked with a light laugh.

"See here, Susie dear," he began, as if to open discussion of the project; "are we entirely forgetful about our interests in New Jersey? Why can we not operate this field from there? And your friends—very likely you will miss them?" He might have proceeded with a dozen other questions out of his timidity, but Susan waved for silence.

"Well, about the friends—we can very quickly drop all fears upon that score," she said, not with an ironical tone, however. "I do not want to appear unnatural. We do value friendship. True friends will remain. Social climbers will forget us; but we'll startle them some day in all their 'first family' talk."

She laughed lightly at some thought in her mind. "First families over in America—why, a million dollars and then two or three years out of sight till the fresh paint dries—there you have a place in the set over there. We'll surprise them some day—some day, dear old Benny—like a

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fairy godmother out of a book." She had her arm about her husband's shoulder with the kiss of a young lover ready for him, looking up gleefully into his eyes, till he smiled in the great contagion of her animated joyousness. "And finally," she resumed with a playful imperiousness, "to-morrow we shall devise all our plans about the business interests over there. Shanley, for another thousand per annum, will take precious care of the affairs of Harrington & Shanley."

And so in this beginning of the European career of Susan and Ben, the plan of social campaign was adequately unfolded. It was according to an old formula known since the Deluge. Make money first—get rich; honors will follow. There is the law in that department of life. Though it is thus baldly expressed, it yet needs no further elucidation. In monarchies and republics men and women have followed that law, and "families" have thus had their origin. Beyond the pales of the religious, the military, and the governmental hierarchies, in that peculiar sphere called "the world," here is the process to social ascendency: Build up a fortune, and in a generation or two you are one of "the first families." *"Virtus laudatur et alget,"* said Juvenal to the magnificent Romans; "moral worth is praised, but left out in the cold." Susan and Ben knew that well. Fifth Avenue will witness to it, and so will the fashionable boulevards in

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Europe, and even the *nouveaux riches* of the gold coasts in Alaska and South Africa.

II

On the very morrow the Harringtons held a brief but vigorous session on ways and means concerning the business in New Jersey. They adopted sure plans by which they would continue to reap money from their medical shops in Jersey City, while they were planting seeds for richer harvests in Paris. The schemes devised by "that clever Susan" to bring their medicinal concoctions to the practical notice of Europe would have done credit to an entire staff of advertising agents in any New York house. By nature every Yankee is fitted for the art of advertising; the whole country is a huge billboard. And Mrs. Ben Harrington was a thorough Yankee in this respect, though she had an Irish grandfather on the paternal side and a Scotch great-grandfather from her mother's people. Ben, too, was a typical Yankee; in him also a little strain of Irish and Scotch blood, a source from which he may have inherited his aggressiveness and shrewdness, the former characteristic being altogether in abeyance when he was dealing with Mrs. H. "Eminently practical," was the pronouncement upon him from childhood. During his recent years his practicality manifested itself in marketable salves, pills, and a score of nostrums.

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Transactions in real estate had augmented his sources of wealth; these were to continue in New Jersey while he was trying his hand at that game in Europe. But, perhaps, the most unique of the new enterprises that developed in Europe was his business in barber-shops and parlors for hair-dressing. Americans, in most of the mechanical trades, were far more proficient than the Europeans. Their skill in dentistry, for example, became so lucrative that more than one of Ben Harrington's adventuresome compatriots built up a fortune from the pursuit of the art. Ben already knew one of these fashionable millionaires—fashionable even in royal circles—who could say, in a manner truly Yankee, that he had crowned teeth in all the crowned heads of Europe. Ben would have a sentence similar to that pronounced upon himself; he would be able to say that his men—and therefore he—had shaved the crowns of all the crowned heads. From Havre to Bordeaux and especially at the aristocratic summering places, he established his shops. His name was not attached to them, but their financial proceeds were forwarded to his name, to his welcoming hands in the office on Rue de Rivoli.

III

With the ever-increasing successes in their business schemes, and with the figures that

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counted their ever-widening riches, the Harringtons did not lose sight of the social star. They kept scrutinizing every horizon for the advent of an appropriate one; and after ten years of strenuous labor in finances, they detected one making for the zenith, and they followed fast to catch it.

They suddenly left Paris for a prolonged sojourn in northern Egypt and Palestine, and then spent a year in Italy. Cosmopolitan they felt without exaggeration, and, like Ulysses in Tennyson's line, "a part of all that they had met." Money, employed with keen discrimination, had opened many doors to them. They had rubbed elbows with people about thrones. And when they returned to Paris they were no longer mere money-making Americans. They continued to ply their trade earnestly, but not in person; tried and trusty vassals were their commissaries. Ben Harrington, from his monies in medicines and barber-shops and rents, was now, if you please, M. le Marquis d'Anters; Susan was Mme. la Marquise; Ward, the elder son, was M. le Comte and Maxwell, M. le Vicomte. All so easy to be remembered, said Madame, who found it so mystifying to try to understand the ramifications that hang upon a family tree. Surely their American visitors would be capable of learning that simple list correctly.

Susan, as Madame la Marquise, became more lordly than she ever dreamed to be in the heights

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of Parisian aspirations. She knew how to have things said in the society corners of the newspapers, always with sufficient regard for perspective and with due intervals between the several announcements. Conditions shaped themselves precisely as she reckoned. All the world, if that was her translation of *tout le monde,* was willing to have a day with one of the incongruous programmes at the Chateau d'Anters. The coat of arms remained a puzzle; but, with the cobra-de-capello out of the way, people were unanimous that the huge pheasant was the sign of a good dinner; indeed, that was its certain significance, they emphatically said, after they had returned from Claireville.

At the Chateau, Madame was most assuredly the head; the legislative, judicial, and executive authority was vested in her, "despite the Salic law and old French poppycock," as she was wont to say, sometimes with a jaunty fling of her head and a playful tap upon her husband's shoulder. Yet there was method in her madness, and Madame enjoyed the humor of it all, though in the presence of her guests she was as serious in the princely airs as if she came from a long line of ancestors to the manner born.

The two sons, who were called Ward and Maxwell when in town, but always M. le Comte and M. le Vicomte while at the country-house, were, in a sense, puppets in the play; but they were not

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spoiled children. The rod of discipline which hung in their bedrooms was sometimes taken down. It mattered not that the Chateau was entertaining a throng of visitors; le Comte or le Vicomte went speedily upstairs and took the medicine when they deserved the dose. Madame knew how to lecture, but she was too wise to educate children merely through sentimental lectures, and she was not going to allow her children to go the broad American way of impudence and unrestraint. They would keep the commandments of God and the Church; that was her very simple mandate, which she very sensibly enforced. Doing that, she added, they can knock their heads into a kite for all the fun in the world. And they progressed, as had to be the event, toward a sound mind in a sound body. The pompous conventionalities of the functions at the Chateau were not to warp their characters. They had to go with the poor children of the village every Saturday morning to catechism class at the convent, and enjoy the democratic play-hour afterward in the yard. And in turn they were *demi-pensionnaires* at the great school on Rue Vaugirard, a place that furnished them the company of the select youth of France, delighting Madame's heart with brilliant prospects for Ward and Maxwell. What an inheritance her children were to have beyond their family fortune! They possessed as effective assets the

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traits of Irish-Scotch-American parentage and the *savoir faire* of French manners.

IV

The Marquis d'Anters, much as he enjoyed the hours at the Chateau, liked to get back to town and be companionable with himself as shrewd, business-loving Ben Harrington. Pigeonholes, desks, and conferences about medicines and barber-shops and real estate—these were his playgrounds. And Lady Susan gave him his heart's content there, though when occasion demanded she would peremptorily call for a scene with their noble selves in the rôle of d'Anters. Ordinarily, in town they were plain Harringtons; their sons at school were Ward and Maxwell Harrington. But let their town-house be threatened with a visit from Americans, and immediately the titled names rang through the rooms.

"Oh, call me Ben, will you, Susie?" said he one autumn afternoon when he returned tired from an office on the Rue Blaguard. He sank back into a comfortable *fauteuil* and started to light his pipe. "I am not smart enough just now to hold up d'Anters."

"But a woman named Spingrass and her daughter from Jersey City are coming to take

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lunch with us to-day," quickly spoke up Madame la Marquise. "Think of it—they know some of my distant relatives in Jersey City!"

"Jersey City!" shouted the pet parrot, mimicking the emphasis of my lady's tone. And then, as if disgusted, the bird called out by way of commentary, "Great Scott!"

The two boys laughed heartily at this perfect interpretation of their father's feeling. And Ben was agreeable enough to pay the parrot the compliment of repeating the expression, "Great Scott; That's about right, Polly." And he went off to finish his pipe upstairs. He had visions of audacious staring on the part of the Spingrass visitors, and their insistence to hear the history of his remarkable progress in finance and society "since Susie and he left the crowded streets in Jersey."

"Ward and Maxwell," said Madame, with a significant toss of the head, "you are Comte and Vicomte to-day. Remember!" And she went off to pass the cautionary word along to the servants.

But the alarm over the visit of the Spingrass ladies was a false one. They did not come; no explanation was given for their failure to appear. Perhaps they had anticipated a single hour of hospitality from the Harringtons, but were scared off to Berlin at the appearance of

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the note, under a bewildering crest embossed upon a huge piece of paper—"M. le Marquis d'Anters will be at Rue de Rivoli on Wednesday."

However, the studied expectations at the town-house went not without service. Late in the afternoon a coach drew up before the door. A tall man, slightly stooped, descended and presented his card at the door, asking to see Mr. Ben Harrington. "Mr. I. Ruhlman, Beacon Street, Boston," was the inscription upon the card; and Ben read it over and over again, wondering all the while who the stranger was, and why he chose to see Harrington and not the Marquis d'Anters.

Madame entered the room to assist in solving the question; she maintained that two heads are better than one in such crises. She was quick to discover a process that would give them some information about the stranger. In nationality he might be anything but Irish, "very probably an American Jew," she whispered.

"Here," she said, summoning a valet, "go down and announce in French that the Marquis d'Anters will receive the visitor in a few minutes." And when he bowed out of the door, Madame said to her husband, "This will discover if Ruhlman is French in any fashion."

Back came the valet to say that the visitor spoke French like one from the Boulevards, and

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requested to know if the Marquis d'Anters and Mr. Ben Harrington were identical.

Susan dismissed the valet, and then called a German mechanic, telling him to show the gentleman from the salon to Mr. Harrington's office. "Speak in German to him," was her further instruction, "and let me know immediately if he understands your language."

"If he is a linguist," Ben ventured to say when the German withdrew, "we must invite him for a week-end to the Chateau, Madame la Marquise." He smiled good-naturedly and repeated the old story about the man who could speak in five languages and keep silent in fifteen.

"Certainly, my dear Marquis," said Madame with a light laugh.

"In the meantime, you might call up our little Irish governess and send her down next to learn if Ruhlman understands Gaelic."

"That's out of the question," answered Susan. "That's a tongue for spiritual talk, and I'll bet this man is here on worldly business, to buy your tonics or rent one of your barber-shops. If he is more than that, invite him to lunch."

And when the German servant returned and informed them that the visitor discoursed German as one from the environs of a Rathaus, Madame la Marquise nodded her head, saying, "A linguist, splendid. We'll have him at the Chateau next Sunday."

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"Very well, Madame la Marquise," was Ben's contented rejoinder. "He is very probably Jewish—Mr. I. Ruhlman of Boston. Traveling under the star of business. The world-roamers; the money-changers around the whole earth. I'll vouchsafe to say that he knows every dialect between here and Cadiz and off to Jericho. Business develops in Jews the ready memory of a Macaulay and the linguistic ability of a Mezzofanti."

"My dear, my dear," ejaculated Madame, at his display of erudition, "save a remark like that for a day at Claireville. Gracious, that is worthy of a salon of the old régime." And then, to exhibit a little of her own erudition, she said, "I put it beyond a Jew to learn Irish or to converse in the Basque language. The Irish is too sweet for common tongues; it is too sacred for the gross affairs of life. And as for the Basque, my dear Marquis d'Anters, you know what the Spaniards say—that the devil himself can not understand that language and so has to leave the Basque people out of his machinations."

Ben went out smiling, and downstairs to have the interview with Ruhlman. He had observed many affluent Jews in Paris, and he expected to find his visitor looking one of the type—men of medium height, generally inclining toward corpulency as they became prosperous; with thick hair, bushy or curling if allowed to grow; flex-

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ible, curving lips, large nostrils, and dark, deep-set eyes peering out over prominent cheek-bones.

Mr. Ruhlman did not approach the type by one-half of its Harrington configuration. If he showed in his earlier life more distinct marks of Jewish origin, he had by now worn them nearly away. The hard, angular lines that stood about his mouth readily indicated that he had lived a strenuous existence with the Yankee. Again, his eyes were not close and shining, but open and full of kindly regard. Money-getting had not smothered his heart. The affairs of trade doubtless filled his head, but human love had some place in his heart. Very probably his kindly concern during many years for his charming Marie Ruhlman was the antidote against the oppressive cares in the marts of money.

Ben Harrington managed to find out that Ruhlman was a collector of bits of art and antiques, owning a flourishing establishment near the State House in Boston. His present excursion to Europe was for the purpose of purchasing the mosaics in an old, abandoned Spanish castle. He had stopped to see Mr. Ben Harrington—"M. le Marquis d'Anters," he very tactfully said, correcting himself—to see if he could procure the Louis Quatorze razors which he had traced to the door of Mr. Ben Harrington.

Ruhlman, after this short interview, was

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deemed qualified for an invitation to the Chateau for the following Sunday. And being at leisure for the week-end, he betook himself to Claireville, and enjoyed the great make-believe of the American nobility. Indeed, though in a quizzical spirit at first, he readily began to enjoy the outing with the enthusiasm of a child; the spirit of hilarity was contagious; the seriousness and *bonhomie,* like energy from positive and negative poles, combined for light and motion. He was pleased with the genuine warmth of the hospitality, at the unaffected manifestation of heartiness. Like many another, Ruhlman was tired of the frigid conventionalities of town life in all cities, where ardor in fancy or feeling for any cause was deemed unintellectual, even vulgar; where hauteur and a sad visage were too frequently the manner of men's faces. Merriment was absent from the social festivities of the world, because the springs of deep joy were dried up through the pursuit of false philosophies and the unsatisfying phantoms of sensualism.

Here at the Chateau, Ruhlman found almost a carnival of laughter. He looked deep and saw under the surface of the grotesque play. Others, with a superficial glance at the pretentious nobility of the house, may have judged the family as but one degree from insane. Ruhlman appeared able to take the viewpoint of the d'Anters, to see that in their heart of hearts they were enjoying

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the harmless braggadocio like children upon a nursery floor.

"Others are insane not to be able to play at similar fun," said one of his musings. "There is no reason why the dear Marquise and her tribe should not live to the age of Methuselah. They surely will not die from American ennui and worry."

He saw, too, that amid all the riot of drollery and laughter there was nothing that was low and vulgar. A sacred respect for the decencies of moral life breathed through the house; truthfulness and sobriety kept in firm touch with the essentials of life; let all other things be material for hilarious play.

With that analysis of the conditions, it was no surprise that Mr. Ruhlman sought for an invitation for his charming young niece to come for a week-end to Claireville. "My little niece," said he, as he thanked his cordial host on Monday morning, "will spend part of the winter and spring in Paris. I should like to have her know the house d'Anters."

"Most certainly, Mr. Ruhlman," spoke Madame, as the one to invite ladies. "She will be welcome, welcome, indeed." And then, after a pause, "Does she return with you?"

"I will be, if plans come to pass, in Boston, though I may visit Russia in the summer, by the time my niece may want to return home. She

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will come across the water with a party of girls to a school in Paris, but I may find a suitable place in the environs for her—I think she would enjoy her sojourn better at Neuilly or some such suburb. Indeed, I know of a very acceptable family, a relative of one of her teachers, with whom she may reside in Issy."

"And Issy is quite near to Claireville, a pleasant hour's walk over the old coach-road," said Madame with alert attention. "But we'll drive with her any time she cares to come."

"Is the Madame her mother living?" ventured little M. le Vicomte, who presumed permission to speak a word about the expected visitor, noting the interest others took in her.

Fortunately, Mr. Ruhlman did not have to reply. He would have been at a loss to know what to answer, since he did not know and never knew anything about Marie's mother. That was a hushed secret in his life.

"What a question to ask," exclaimed Madame as she put her arm about little Maxwell. "Don't expect to learn all the world's history in a day, my dear. And Mr. Ruhlman is in a hurry to return to town."

"I'll show her the *Robinson,*" said the Vicomte pleasantly, pointing toward the quaint little house set among the branches of a huge oak in the garden.

"You'll like Marie," replied Mr. Ruhlman, as

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he moved down the walk, having said his adieu.

"We'll take good care of Marie at d'Anters," called out Madame, turning with an elaborate wave of her hand, and going into the house.

"Marie?" Madame repeated the name interrogatively, looking at Ben. He was Ben now that the guest was gone, and it was time to think of Rue de Rivoli. "That is queer enough. Marie what? Her good mother may have been French."

The good Susan Harrington did not know how near to the truth was her conjecture. She could have learned that Mr. Ruhlman had, long years before, made a similar guess, though that was all he ventured to imagine about Marie's mother.

"And what do you think Ruhlman is?" asked Ben as he went upstairs to get ready for the journey to town.

"Most probably a Jew, my dear," she answered readily, as if it was as sure as a book. "But he may have spent his youth in Alsace—see how he talks French and German so well."

"And that may explain the name of Marie, his little niece," ventured Ben, as he closed the discussion.

But it was not the explanation of the name of the beautiful young girl whom they came to know. Marie's father alone, as Mr. Ruhlman

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thought, could answer; but where in the world was he? Leave that to Madame la Marquise d'Anters to find out, if ever it should become her business to inquire. Though she had entertained a motley world, perhaps in a brusque American manner, she had not lost sight of tendencies that make for refinement and genuine culture. Merely the fact of motherhood lifted her to the heights of that power which maternal sympathy possesses; and, given the occasion, she would not consider a trip across the mountains of a continent as fatiguing, if she could close a motherly arm about Marie of the House d'Anters in days of distress.

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CHAPTER III

AN AUTHOR COMES

I

THE first week in November brought to pass a singular event in the history of d'Anters. Even the Marquis, who had grown accustomed to novelties in his own house, took time to be amazed at this unprecedented occurrence. It was this: when the family came out from Paris for the usual week-end, no card or letter was on Madame's table to announce any prospective visitor for the ensuing days. Madame for the moment appeared bewildered. Times were when more than twenty gleeful replies to invitations greeted eager eyes; never till now had a Friday evening come and gone without the postman. And yet Madame was not disheartened, even if disappointed; something akin to gladness must have been expressed in her eyes, when she turned toward little Maxwell, and elicited an unguessed remark from him. He had accompanied her with the bundles to the convent, and afterward came up with her to the room, more than once having said on the road, "Perhaps we'll find a note from Marie."

"Marie will not come this time," said Madame, finding the table empty, and showing that she

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had remembered the boy's expectation. "The castle all to ourselves, *chéri,*" she added; "and you may have a whole day of fun to-morrow. If no world-trotter comes in this time, you can be just Maxwell all day long. We'll take a rest."

"But don't you wish Marie was coming?" asked the lad, who, for some inexplicable reason since the visit of Mr. Ruhlman, had often mentioned the niece. Though but eight years of age, little Maxwell, who so heartily enjoyed vigorous play with the boys after catechism at the convent, and knew how to climb to any nest in the park, seemed to be in love with an utter stranger. Ward, his senior by five years, was more likely to have a disposition for interest in the young ladies—the sober-minded Ward, who would come directly home from the hour at the convent and take some flowers over to the little cemetery where his two little sisters slept in death; and afterward, if he was not reading an old romance up in the quiet tower-room, he would go to Jacques, the old tapestry weaver in the porter's lodge, and watch him at his curious trade.

"Marie may not be in love with d'Anters," said Madame, with a kindly glance at Maxwell. And then, noticing the sudden shadow upon his upturned face, she stroked his forehead and drew him into her arms. "But Marie will enjoy it; yes, indeed; something makes me feel that way

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about her. She will enjoy it all by herself and just ourselves."

"Just by ourselves, Mother?" queried he. "Are no others coming at all this winter?"

She did not answer him directly. For the Marquis passed by the open door saying aloud, "I wonder if dinner is ready." Maxwell and the mother took the hint and went down with him.

At dinner Maxwell managed to gather from the talk that the house d'Anters did not anticipate a very energetic round of social days during the approaching winter. Madame and Monsieur were unanimous in saying that a quiet season would be a pleasurable change. They had run the play into many acts; they had sheltered and dined and amused a hundred caravans of notables; a thousand visitors, easily more than a thousand, had partaken of the brilliant hours at the Chateau and gone off to recount the splendor of it all to stay-at-homes in the round world from San Francisco, via New York, to Honolulu. "There is an end to all things under the sun," quoth the Marquis, as if he were citing a verse out of the Old Testament. Ward was glad enough in the prospects of the winter days and nights with his room of books—he could have stories from the old gardener, who had been in the Crimea; or again he would sit down in the little lodge and get other stories from old Jacques, and watch him make the designs come

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true in the tapestries. To Maxwell, the proposal for a winter of solitude was not so assuring—he found a pleasure in the breezy motion of the indoor parties; he liked to see his mother marshal them about, as if she had been born for that occupation and worked at it for a hundred years, growing younger all the time; but then even Maxwell, with a little laugh which the others caught up, said that "winter would be all right this time if Marie would come out often to Claireville."

"You must learn from her a thousand American things," spoke up the mother, with an air which any one would know to mean, "I have a new thought."

And it was a new proposal, as far as the children were concerned. Madame and her husband had more than once spoken of it together. Maxwell showed that he was waiting to hear of it, even if Ward just then mentioned that he was going to look at the peacocks before he went up to his room for a good November story.

"Father may take you to New York next summer," said the mother directly. A twofold pleasure was in this announcement: first, the proposed voyage made the two boys look at each other in wide-eyed delight, and secondly, Mr. Ben Harrington, Marquis d'Anters, was called "father" by Susan, Marquise d'Anters, while within the Chateau. Surely here they all were at last *en*

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famille even at Claireville. Was it a forecast of times to be all winter, when they would be able to put aside the funny drama of nobility and keep the curtain down upon their play, and see no more of little potentates from stock exchanges or pompous costumes from all the quarters of the compass?

"But this is a long look ahead," Susan said, as if a surmise in the hearts of the others needed to be rectified. "We shall have yet a few grand days at d'Anters before we put out the lights—a blaze of glory that shall illuminate all the road from here to Paris."

"And the Atlantic ocean across to New York," said Ben with his quiet drollery, and winking at the children.

Maxwell took the forecast literally, and without any concern about so trivial a matter as to who would pay the piper for it all, thinking often, in the light-hearted manner of a child, that his father's fortune was multiplying daily, and something had to be done to save the banks from bursting. In a troubled dream over this problem he had once asked his mother to buy a pet animal for every child in Claireville, waking with a start from his philanthropic adventure when a huge cobra-de-capello shot out of a thicket and killed an English pheasant and raised his head to strike at Maxwell.

"Marie will surely see the light and come out

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to d'Anters," said he, quick upon his father's irony.

The others laughed at his insistence in mentioning Mr. Ruhlman's niece, wondering whether it was done through his own sense of humor or whether in some spirit of childish idealization Marie loomed up before him as a fairy princess from unknown parts of the earth.

When dinner was ended they went out to the quaint "glass-house," where the Marquis d'Anters had, in hours of recreation, arranged a most delightful play-room. Opportunities for all sorts of indoor amusements were there, from the things that divert children in the kindergarten to the comfortable corner where old men could sit over chess and see kings and queens come and go and the knights about them. In the deep recesses of this spacious hall, banks of bushes and plants of nearly every species were growing, some with their swaying flowers, as the miniature fountains played over them, the leaves sparkling as if with myriads of diamonds under the brilliant electric lights. Down at the west end of this conservatory, beyond the billiard-table, for the space of fifty feet, appeared a forest lane—the long, irregular rows of thick columns having been encrusted with lichen-covered bark, and vines growing about them up to the arching rafters. Yet a real, massive oak grew in their midst, running out through the glass roof, with a little aperture left about it

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so that the squirrels might come down—as they always did when Maxwell ran over and tapped upon the tree, calling up to his pets and giving them a handful of nuts, watching them twist and turn and scamper away, like flashes of gray, here and there, up the tree; and then would follow the patter of shells upon the glass, and straightway the squirrels returned to Maxwell's hand.

Here the family enjoyed that Friday night as they had often done on other evenings. The Marquis, after he made a turn in the vast room, "having shaken hands with some of the favorite plants," as he said, went over to the billiard-table, and upon the cover he drew out several papers which referred to a new scheme in his mind—not a money-making one this time, but a project that was to take money from him, one that had been suggested to him by the visit of Mr. Ruhlman. He had remembered Mr. Ruhlman's quest for the Louis Quatorze razors. Ben Harrington took the hint—he would become interested in a little museum of his own making, grow to be an authority upon some archeological subject, with specimens from every quarter of the globe, and a catalogue to describe them and to tell the contemporaneous history relating to each of them. The Louis Quatorze razors gave the Marquis a start; why should he not make a museum out of the implements that man had employed in past ages for shaving and hair-

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dressing; razors and scrapers were easy to find; down at Angers, where two of his lucrative tonsorial parlors were operating, he had looked in at the ruins of an old Roman bath. He could endeavor to procure there one of the strigils that perhaps had served Julius Cæsar; and at Marseilles he would surely find some tool that Greek gladiators had used after their bath in oil; and in Jerusalem—but good Jews, said Ben, did not clip their beards; and in Babylon, perhaps, they had some kind of pumaceous substance to polish the hairless parts of their head and face. And so his playful dream went on over the paper on the billiard-table. After all, he was musing to himself, he could enrich his collection with specimens from the sciences allied to shaving; such were tomahawks from the Indians, Turkish scimitars, and why not a French guillotine, which took beard and scalp away at one clip?

The Marquis was engaged over a plan that did not require a silent chamber all about him. Consequently he did not heed the hilarious play that was going on, as the mother and her two sons moved about in the great glass-house. Now they were blowing up a score of colored balloons and flinging them at one another, the twisting things flying and hissing about; and whoever got hit had to cry out and retreat ten feet back to another fortress of shrubbery. And when the little war was over, the Marquise being left a reigning

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and merry queen in all the country from the little fish-pond in the southeast corner to the mountain of cactus in the northwest of that "undercover land," they went fishing with great colored torches and watched the sullen German carp slip under the darkness of the rocks; and the hundreds of goldfish, in their section of the aquarium, scampered about as if the end of the sea-world were at hand. And then, after an elaborate preparation, they went down on tiptoe to the great oak, Ward rattling the nuts with a sound which the squirrels would hearken to, and then tapped upon the tree; and Maxwell, just as the cautious animals were ready to take their food, lit a tapering fuse. "Bang!" went twenty firecrackers, and away like a flash went the squirrels. The canary cages showed the flutter of bright wings, and little snatches of frightened songs were heard.

"Good-night," called out Madame through her laughter. "And it's good-night for all of us, my dear," she said, coming over to the father, and laughing again as she leaned over his papers.

"Even if we have no visitors to-morrow," she remarked as the lights were going out one by one in the great Chateau, "we shall have the merriest of play ourselves."

II

The morrow, however, brought a visitor, and

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one for whom d'Anters became a devoted friend. He came in the manner of a hundred others—with just a card from somebody who knew Marquis d'Anters, from somebody who had been at the Chateau at least ten times during the past five years. This somebody was Lady McCornish, of Bumblebee Downs, Sussex, England, now in London for the winter; and she wanted her young friend, Mr. Harry Crawford, of Boston, to know the pleasantest of hours at d'Anters. "He is engaged upon a new novel, perhaps we should more accurately call it an historical romance," Lady McCornish wrote in Harry's note. She did not state that Harry had never written a line beyond collegiate exercises, nor had he as yet put pen to paper in the matter of this unprecedented literary enterprise which he was about.

"You will get plenty of color at d'Anters," she had advised him with the air of a devoted patroness; "color in great daubs, perhaps," she added with a smile. "But you will be really recreated there, and I shall not be surprised to hear that you have met there some characters who are worth while."

And Harry went across London town, past Westminster and the Parliament buildings, and across the bridge and back again, turning this way and that with buoyant, eager aspirations to find some lucky vista that might later serve him

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in putting the incidents of his story together. Towers and arches, the friezes and the pediments upon all the buildings, made him stand at gaze, and set him thinking in a very indefinite way; hoping, too, that as he would have to say a word about Roman architecture and Jewish temples, he might find a suggestion before his eyes on the streets of London. Moreover, there was all the archeological wealth in the British Museum; and the quaint old man whom he met there explained everything. And Harry must go for a long morning's ramble in the Ghetto, on a Saturday morning especially, to observe the Jews, some in strict orthodoxy and others buying and selling and changing money as if it were not their Sabbath. But he would prefer to talk with an orthodox Israelite, for he wanted to meet such a character for his story. And finally he would stroll along the river banks and notice people and, as far as manners would let him, he would search their faces or catch an occasional phrase that he might set down with cosmopolitan effect in his book.

But London was too voluminous to read in the few hours he allotted to himself; he must return when he had more definite thoughts about his venture in literature; then he would know just what characters and scenes he could employ. So off from London did he go, did he go, as his rhythmical walk seemed to say; and indeed,

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crossing the Thames on his way to the station, he laughed to hear himself whispering, "London bridge is falling down, falling down." Think of it—a young American, sound in every limb, aged four-and-twenty, already three years away from Harvard, a stalwart, healthy young man who had left a name in Harvard football, who for the past two years had been athletic coach at Holy Cross —imagine such a man going over the Thames in daylight, humming with great glee a snatch of a childish rhyme. If this spirit kept with him he would not need a bridge under his feet when he came to the Seine; he should be able to walk the air.

He did not loiter about the bridge when he reached Paris; yet he would not go across the river, there under the shadow of Notre Dame Cathedral, without a long, almost adoring gaze at the great edifice. Often before had he gone up and down these well-known squares of Paris. With his mother, while he was in his teens, he had spent two summers on the continent, wandering with guide-books in hand over this very bridge where he was now standing. How well he remembered the first day he climbed up the dark, winding stairs in the tower of Notre Dame, and all in a shudder gazed at the grotesque gargoyles. There they were still in his eyes, more interesting still in his reminiscences. He was half inclined to climb up to them again

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and rub his hand upon them intimately, though after ten years of absence. But he would come back to them, he would return that very evening to Paris and refresh his eyes before old scenes—the Place de la Concorde, where the statuary groups of Alsace-Lorraine were sentimentally clad in black, dead to France despite the sentiment; and the garden by the Louvre, and the queer, awkward venders over near Montmartre, and the still more awkward figures of the students in the Latin Quarter, and a thousand other scenes that he knew all around out-of-door Paris, sinners and saints on every street. He would have time to revisit them; for the present his thoughts were on other things; a new purpose, like a beacon, stood ahead of him, and Lady McCornish's note to d'Anters seemed to be calling out to him and urge him on to his enterprise. Paris was only a trivial incident to him now. Far horizons looked near to his eye, and golden clouds that appeared as firm to tread as cobbled streets of traffic. In such a mood the commonest things that he passed, though they did not now delay him, seemed to move in a new world. Men were larger—even the little Frenchmen—and children in the plashing puddles by the curb were fit to greet Francis Thompson in his "nurseries of heaven." What if he should now meet some "maiden in distress"? What if from some idyllic garden over the wall a glove fell at his feet, sum-

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moning him for a long-expected chevalier? One-fourth of Harry Crawford would have tarried with the air of a gallant. But the three-fourths of him, alive to his predominant purpose, would have spurred him on, as he was now doing, and laughing healthily at his hazy quixotism.

When the train from Gare Mont Parnasse put him off at Clamart, he decided to walk up to Claireville. He would need to prepare his speech before he met the nobles in the splendor of their chateau. Should he encounter an ogre there, or a princess fairer than any described in books! Would he by lucky chance come upon a little Jewish lady there with whom he might discourse, and find in her a temperament perfectly adaptable to his book? Let him meet her father, too, ardent in the traditions of Israel, more ardent still in the aspirations for a restored Zion in the territorial seclusiveness of Syria or Egypt.

And with a hodge-podge of incoherent conjectures in his thoughts, Harry Crawford reached Claireville. It was nine o'clock on Saturday morning, and the little world of the village was astir for the day. The *facteur* with his letter-box under his arm was stepping into a café for the cheery spirits of a glass to start him on his round with the morning mail. "It's droll," said he to the girl at the bar, "very droll." He pointed out to the square before the church, and, with a shrug of his shoulders—a gesture which

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now in the millionth performance signified nothing—he said, "There comes one of the troupe for Milady. Very droll. By himself, very droll. A beautiful day like this and only one—by himself alone. They will be lonesome at the Chateau." And he went on chattering away, though he paid Harry the compliment of being "a young man magnificent in the carriage, and of grand shoulders that could stand against ten little French soldiers, and of a handsome face that was as it ought to be and more than correct. May he find great hospitality at d'Anters," said the poky, good-natured postman, and adding as he went to his route, "a little princess for a happy marriage," though John the letter-man knew, as all Claireville did, that a marriage was an occurrence never known of at the Chateau.

The children playing along the road, their heavy *sabots de bois* clattering on the stones, stopped to greet Harry Crawford and to point out to him the towers of the Chateau, knowing that a stranger in Claireville on a Saturday morning was a pilgrim to the big house. They could inform Harry that the d'Anters were at home, for had they not been to catechism with M. le Vicomte at the convent; and they could tell that *M. l'étranger* was American, for had he not, with a good smile, spoken to children on the street? Englishmen with rigid, sour faces never did that, nor the Italians with twisted

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moustaches and the scowling eyes. With the pleasant chatter of three young boys at his side—however undignified it may have appeared—Harry went on toward the Chateau. He was not surprised to learn that the family d'Anters enjoyed the respect and love of the village, though from one garrulous lad Harry was able to surmise that the older people some years before did not entertain kindly thoughts about the rollicking Chateau, and what they considered a boastful, audacious appropriation of a family name. But now all that was passed, Harry could conclude from the unsophisticated utterances of the little gossips. Yes, everybody now was glad to see Madame la Marquise, just as the children were delighted to play with M. le Vicomte. But, alas, said they, M. le Vicomte hinted to them to-day at the convent that they were soon going to America; *M. l'étranger* was in time to see d'Anters before the departure.

With that amount of Claireville knowledge concerning the Chateau, Harry Crawford reached the *conciergerie,* and dismissed his corps of volunteer attendants, having taken from his pocket enough money for the boys to purchase every plaything that could make a game in the village. Old Jacques put down the threads of a tapestry and pointed out to the visitor the pathway through the garden up to the house. There was no ceremony over this official act, for was it

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not Saturday morning, and was not this a stranger asking for Madame, with an evident note of introduction in his hand? And up the winding pathway went the young man, under the purple beeches, the lindens, and the larches—just such a row of trees as he might meet with on an estate in Massachusetts. A shower of golden leaves fell from the maples, giving all the windows of the Chateau the appearance of winking eyes; and the west tower seemed to nod at him through the swaying trees. Gorgeous banks of chrysanthemums enriched the terraces, and flaming torches of scarlet sage lit up sections of the extensive lawns as far as he could see. Harry was tempted to stay and fill his eyes with the delightful vistas; but noticing a woman come out upon the great stone porch and look down at him, he doffed his hat, set his cane under his arm, and went resolutely up the walk.

"Perhaps it's Madame la Marquise," Harry was musing. "Now for the goddess of courts to steer me clear of a mistake!" He was nervous lest, if it were the Madame herself, he should incur her displeasure for not knowing her important personage. If she would only run out of the way he could get safely to the door-bell and send in the note from Lady McCornish.

Madame, in splendid nonchalance, pretended to be enraptured with the glorious November morn as it paraded over her lawns and wood-

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lands. Out of the side of her eyes she had ample vision left to note that Harry was a stranger and a guest for d'Anters. "A manly-looking boy," she whispered to herself, as she reached over the balustrade for a brilliant leaf from the vine. "American, too, and probably an athlete. A kindly, intelligent face, and showing good breeding." And smiling as she turned toward the door, evidently recalling the remark that was on Ward's lips these days, she said, "I wish Marie were coming to-day. What a day we could have with them—what a day!"

She was at the door, tarrying as if in unperturbed meditation, when Harry reached the wide stairway. She was perfectly sure to enact one of her informal introductions, but he, poor man, was half a-shudder lest he should begin with, "Is this Madame la Marquise d'Anters?" and learn that it was only a sort of feminine majordomo. Would the stone steps melt away, and the ground swallow him up? His eyes were cast down, yet he was scanning each cautious move.

"A beautiful day!" He was startled out of his timidity by a voice of perfect good nature. He looked up and saw the Madame with her hand on the door.

"Indeed it is, a very beautiful day, indeed," and to find more to say, he looked down the garden slope.

"Off in that direction is Versailles," said

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Madame with a little nod of her head toward the west. "The country looks entrancing there at this season." She left the door and came forward. "What a pity all the princes are gone from it, all gone, and nobody to fit into the picture as in the old days."

Harry was still at a loss to know what to say. His silent bow was meant to be acquiescence to the Madame's remark; but words would not come. In his surmise, this was Madame la Marquise; yes, beyond a doubt, this was her ladyship, but he was ill-experienced to carry on an unceremonious conversation with a Marquise, though one of that high rank was undertaking to speak intimately with him. He quickly hit upon a way out of the embarrassment—to mention Lady McCornish's name. And looking again at the beautiful clouds of color which showed on the arbors before the house, he said, "Still, what a beautiful scene is here set. Lady McCornish told me to expect to see a fairyland. Such, indeed, I think she rightly called it."

"Lady McCornish was a lover of our out-of-doors," quietly answered the woman, leaving Harry still to his doubts; for any inmate of the house could have made that reply. Harry had to excogitate another way, and was beginning to do so when he was asked, "You have seen Lady McCornish recently?"

"Three days ago," answered he, conscious that

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he was revealing also that he had lost no time between London and d'Anters. Madame also, he thought, would readily make that calculation. "I walked up from Issy, and——"

Madame's look of surprise interrupted his speech, and in a tone of greater surprise she asked, "Walked up? Why didn't you let us know? We would have had the carriage go down for you."

This, then, must be the Madame; and Harry took out Lady McCornish's note, saying as he stepped forward to present it, "But that would be too kind, and I did not wish to have the Chateau disturbed over me. And then it is a morning for a big, lazy fellow like me to exercise, and, moreover, I knew," and he began to stammer, "if you will pardon me for what I had to promise Lady McCornish to say—I knew that the walk would find me better for dinner."

Madame was smiling as she ran her eyes over the note. She must have observed some statement of importance, for her eyes actually beamed at Harry, and her face was radiant with delight. Before she could exclaim any phrase out of her enthusiasm little Maxwell came running up the steps, a crown of golden maple leaves fixed upon his head. He bowed graciously to the visitor and went over to take his hand, as his mother meant him to do with these words: "This is Mr. Harry Crawford of Boston, an author, Maxwell. An

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author from over the sea upon a visit to d'Anters."

"Does Mr. Crawford happen to know Marie?" asked Maxwell with playful naïveté.

"What a question again!" replied the mother, and turning toward Harry, "Maxwell is in love with a girl whom we have never seen—a girl from Boston, who may visit us soon. No, my child," she went on, taking the cold tips of the boy's fingers into her warm hands, "Mr. Crawford will tell you that America is a very large country. Everybody does not get to know everybody over there. But he is a friend of Lady McCornish, dear."

"Lady McCornish?" the boy lifted his face and showed eyes full of questioning.

"Yes, yes, Lady McCornish—you know, that English visitor whom we had two years ago—and she wanted to take you home with her. Yes, yes, Lady McCornish. You remember how she used to quote Carlyle, and make fun of her own Anglican Church, and promise to take you to Ireland to learn the art of courtesy, and then send you to the United States to see queer people."

Whether all this served to assist Maxwell's recollections of Lady McCornish mattered very little. Madame went right on talking in the enthusiasm created by the visit of an author, a man of letters, to d'Anters. The Chateau had entertained types of nearly all professions; but here

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was a writer—a maker of books, who might some day make d'Anters famous in story.

Harry, when he was presented to the Marquis, started to rectify all this celebration of him as an author; but Madame left no pause where the correction could aptly enter. Did not Lady McCornish with her own hand, under the solemnity of her seal, give it out that Mr. Crawford was engaged upon a book? Little publicists and journalists had sat at the table before, but here was a man to make romances and books. How could d'Anters speed him on in his lofty work? There should be no limit to the hospitality—Madame seemed to imply in her every word and gesture, almost with cordial frankness.

Before evening terminated their peregrinations about the house and the estate she had already invited him for a round of visits during the coming winter; again she repeated the cordial invitations during the hour of play in the great glass-house. Maxwell had taken Harry to his heart, and made him partake of all that, in the little lad's eyes, were objects of admiration. Ward had a cozy study in the left tower to show him and a goodly case of books, and not a few pieces of art, sent to him by some former visitors. But Maxwell could show him how the fish in the canal recognized a waving napkin as a signal for food; and where the pheasants were under cover in the thick shrubberies, and the cherry-tree

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where the pretty finches came in the summer; and then the cockatoos and the other birds all in cages, which they would come out to see after dinner; and a thousand other things, marvelous in a child's estimation. And they must go to Versailles to-morrow and see the great fountain, which would play on Sunday, and then visit the Trianon, "which is in nearly every book," said Maxwell, in his glee.

Madame, too, added the Versailles wonders to her list for the morrow.

Harry, however, felt obliged to decline this last proposal. He had not come to remain the night at d'Anters, he said in a graceful apology; but he would make one faithful promise, his hand in Maxwell's, that he would return in a week and remain as long as Maxwell allowed him. He made it clear to them, not in the manner of a boast, but with genuine modesty, that he was taking only a short holiday in Europe preparatory to his work upon a historical romance. He surely would not have mentioned this last item if Lady McCornish had not unceremoniously written him into the list of great authors. And though his own allusion to his work was uttered with all proper brevity, still it was said with an air of assurance, just as if the writing of a book were as commonplace a performance as the reading of one.

Madame was delighted with the prospect of

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becoming a patroness of letters. She and Ben would be a beneficent Maecenas. Ben's money and the encouragement of d'Anters had befriended many a young painter in Paris; the productions of their brushes might be seen along the hallways of the Chateau. And Madame had taken an inspiring interest in several girls who were pursuing musical studies on the continent. But a real author, vouched for by Lady McCornish of London, one of magnificent promise, despite his reticence—that was high tide in the affairs of Claireville; and Madame was going to enrich her traditions through such an opportunity. She would be able to say in the gossip of a tea-hour, "Harry Crawford was here," and in some glorious aftermath when literary circles would be fondling that name, she would add, "Harry Crawford began his latest book in Ward's study, and finished it in the round chamber of the west tower."

Harry Crawford in the quick hours of a pleasant November day saw possibilities come flocking upon him. The air of novelty at the Chateau, and the conglomerate parties which he had heard described, and which he might later witness, the interesting and suggestive chatter that he might overhear among the globe-trotters—all this and more would tend to quicken his imagination and speed him toward the accomplishment of his work when the material was gathered. "Then I shall

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return in the spring," he said to the family group upon the porch, as he was preparing to depart. "I will come out for a few hours with Maxwell next Saturday"; he was recalling his promise of that afternoon. "And then in the springtime, when I have my plot well in hand, I will take the tower room which you so kindly placed at my service. Let me come up to your expectations."

"Marie will surely come then," called out Maxwell as the light-hearted guest turned out past the porter's lodge.

Madame went into the house elated. She saw windows of the Chateau looking out from Harry Crawford's book. She, another Lady Bountiful, was to move about in its pages; her children were to ride in and out like princes from a castle; and the Marquis was to own half of Europe, pack all the present French government upon a volcanic mountain in the south of Italy, make England rewrite its history, after setting Ireland free, and give back the Papal states to their lawful owner. Not since the days when the Harringtons came up from Italy, after their fortune was assured and the Chateau d'Anters was purchased, had Susan enjoyed such a prospect as this now presented by the forthcoming masterpiece. Yet, as in her jolliest days of festivity at the great house, with her bizarre entertainments and hilarious impersonations of nobility, she was sane and sensible in her deepest heart. She had a healthy

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command over her own playful fancies, and she laughed even now over her pleasant indulgence in badinage about the book.

"And will it all come true?" playfully asked Maxwell, as the topic was being dismissed before night prayers.

Madame's answer sent the group laughing up the stairs. "The villain who attempts to spoil it, to thrust out Harry Crawford's heroine and his ten heroes, shall be imprisoned in an underground dungeon and fed upon green apples for a month, then made a bootblack on an island of anarchists in a northern sea."

III

When Harry Crawford returned to Claireville on the following Saturday, he found a writing-room ready for him in the west tower. But he was miles from any thought of putting pen to paper. He had not yet fixed upon the large details of his romance; only the central theme and the chronology of his story were clear in his present plans. Yet his hostess invited no discussion of the motif of the book or the progress which Harry had made; and he, with becoming silence upon these points, took the pleasurable hours at Claireville and Versailles, feeling that the beautiful vistas and the coming and going would give him a stimulus and an impulse when he should begin to write.

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Casually he remarked, as he was again saying his adieux to the new friends whom he now liked intensely, that he would be interested in some studies of Jewish temperament and Jewish domesticities. And this gave Madame a cue; she could extend her service to him even in Boston. She sent her husband to write a note for Harry to Mr. Ruhlman. Her caution prompted her to say "I think Mr. Ruhlman will know some Jews who will be apt for your study."

Harry looked at the superscription when the Marquis appeared with the note of introduction. "I know where this office is," he said, "Mr. Ruhlman is a noted collector of curios, and, if I conjecture well, a Jew himself, though perhaps not what they call orthodox. However, and I thank you," Harry turned to go, putting his arm about Maxwell, "Mr. Ruhlman will help me in this matter, I am sure."

"And if you want a heroine," Maxwell looked up with his bright, playful smile, "will you take Marie? And we'll tell her all about it when she comes."

"Marie will hardly be her name, Monsieur Maxwell," replied Harry, with as young a manner as that of his devoted friend. "If you can find one named Rebecca or Judith, I will take her. Marie will not want me to make a Jewess out of her."

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"But she is Mr. Ruhlman's niece," answered the little reasoner.

"There, there," said Madame, to end the playful dispute, "let Harry away, and tell him to be here in the spring as early as the crocuses and the bluebirds."

The Marquis walked down to put Harry in the carriage. "Give my greetings to Lady McCornish as you pass through London," sang out Madame la Marquise.

"And remember me to Marie," called Maxwell.

And they went in to play an hour in the great glass-house, as happy an hour as anybody could dream of. And Madame in her bantering elation over Harry Crawford's book did not realize that before it was written it was first to be lived in great distress and suffering, and that perhaps it was never to be written as a romance of fiction, but as a true history out of a tragic experience of living realities.

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CHAPTER IV

A MYSTERIOUS LETTER

I

IF A detective stationed himself before the door of Mr. Ruhlman's house in Brookline, if he entered cautiously or took a place as servant and had access to every corner of the house, he would discover nothing extraordinary about the domestic history of his master. Let his inquisitive faculties have their full power, alert, perspicacious and tireless, the sleuth would find nothing but commonplace information to report—a thousand and one bits of art in the several rooms, exquisite rugs and pictures that might be masterpieces, and ornaments upon the mantels and tables; but such things might be duplicated in any similar house in Brookline. Passkeys might entice the various locks in drawers and desks to exhibit their hidden treasures; jewels and odd coins might be found, some of them with more than a marketable value; letters and other writings hidden in the safe would tell of financial transactions and far-off business enterprises.

Yet one letter containing an important secret was written in Mr. Ruhlman's careful hand, and left where no detective would ever think to look

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for a valuable document. It lay always upon the open desk in Marie's room, sealed and in a careless position, as if thrown there to denote that it was altogether unimportant. A searcher after secrets in the desk would have pushed it aside, deeming it a schoolgirl's note which had been overlooked and neglected.

Marie, however, had never seen the letter, or she would have hastily broken the seal to discover what message lay under the superscription. "Private—for Marie Ruhlman." The letter was always removed when she returned from her boarding-school during the weeks of vacation. At such times it would be deposited in Mr. Ruhlman's coat pocket and carried with him all the day in the office on Beacon Street, or wheresoever he went. At night, to assure himself that no molesting eye would see it, he set it in a little leather case under his pillow. And then when Marie was gone from her holidays at home, away to travel, or back to her school in Washington, the letter was placed with studied carelessness upon her desk, with a remark such as this: "If anything happens, Marie will find her history written here." Which meant that if Mr. Ruhlman, though still a man of health, should be taken off by that death which comes as a thief in the night, Marie would be summoned, and the mysterious letter would be found to reveal the little that her reputed uncle knew about her parentage,

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and what arrangement he had made for her future.

Mr. Ruhlman had never spoken about father or mother to Marie. She very naturally thought that they died when she was a babe. She could remember that the years of childhood, summer and winter, were spent in a little convent in New Brunswick, near the head of the Bay of Fundy, where she learned to speak French; and that once or twice a year her uncle, as she called him, came to the school, remained only a few minutes, loading her with gifts, and then hurried away to his multifarious business. And when she learned to write she would send off scrawling letters to her "dear Uncle R.," and receive his typewritten replies to encourage her to live well, and study hard and enjoy all the play—and a number of other set phrases, repeated in his perfunctory letters. And when she told him, in what she thought a grand piece of composition, that that she was preparing for First Communion, she seemed amused at his odd comment—"to make a clever success of that, too"; and she ran off to show the letter to the nuns, laughing innocently at "the funny way Uncle talked."

Marie had lived entirely at the convent, from the time Mr. Ruhlman took her there at the age of two, till she was fifteen. He was glad enough when the nuns arranged to keep Marie even during the summer vacation; they had a country-

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house overlooking the Bay of Fundy, and great playgrounds for the other children, who, like Marie, had to live away from home. There was no problem to solve in the child's regard; she was healthy and took the entire summer as one great play-day, performing with ready cheerfulness whatever little duties were imposed upon her. And the convent, both during the school sessions and in the times of vacation, became so much a part of her that she never referred to another place as "home." She never inquired why her "dear Uncle R." did not invite her to his home. Where could his home be, when his letters rarely came the second time from the same address—now from San Francisco and a month later from Boston? He had left for Marie a list of addresses whither letters to him might be forwarded. Perhaps in some fanciful dream of a child, she imagined that some time when her uncle had finished his business in a hundred cities he would purchase a magnificent palace on a high cliff by the sea, and bring his little niece to preside over the household.

But such dreams were not common to healthy, playful Marie. She was thoroughly happy in the present, each day with its own sufficiency, huge boxes of edibles and playthings coming to her at Christmas and Easter, and rare days from June to September in the country fields and the quiet echoing woods. The horizons of her life

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were about her, very near, abounding in all the happiness that she desired.

The nuns, likewise, were not curious to know why Marie was always kept at the convent. They could easily surmise that Mr. Ruhlman was a man engrossed in his affairs of trade, that perhaps, he was a bachelor and had no suitable home for the little girl. They asked no unnecessary questions; they were ready at any time to render an honorable account of their stewardship. The Mother Superior, when he came with the child, held open the prospectus of the school, showing a page that concerned the religious exercises of the pupils.

"That is very satisfactory," was the only comment from Mr. Ruhlman. And a few minutes later, having taken pause over the question of religion, he added, "Marie can learn the Catholic religion; later, when she comes of age, she can abide by it or not, as she cares to choose."

The nuns could detect some French words in Marie's lisping talk, and, when the time arrived for her studies, she had her French exercises as well as English. And so she went on with study and play, till her fifteenth year. Then, to her surprise, her uncle wrote to her to say good-bye for a time to the nuns. A governess would be sent for her, and Marie would return to Boston. Her uncle had to be absent in Europe during the summer, and Marie would find a pleasant

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programme awaiting her. At home—it was a new phrase to her eyes and heart. Where was "at home"? Yet she adopted the expression as if it had been upon her lips all the years.

On the evening of her first day in her uncle's magnificent home in Brookline she sat down and wrote two long letters to the convent—one in French to Sœur Julie and the other to Mother Frances in English. Both letters were filled with joyous exclamations, and long, rambling, incoherent attempts at descriptions, landscape and rugs and rooms and the decorations and furnishings all jumbled into a glorious melange. Her own rooms were large, one a study where she could keep her books and her prizes from the convent, and another room looked down over the beautiful lawn to a silver lake set in the park; and out on the wide street she could see hundreds of people hurrying past in automobiles and trolley-cars, and all the air was full of life and nobody was waiting, but all were rushing east and west, "and the sun must have been tired going down to-night after so busy a day."

The poor nuns laughed at the unmethodic history of Marie's first day in her Boston home. And then poor Sœur Julie, who had tended Marie in the convent, began to have a little fret about possible dangers—that Marie would forget all about her spiritual duties and lose her way on the peopled highways, and forget the little

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convent; and perhaps Mr. Ruhlman should remember what he said when he brought the child to the convent—that when Marie grew up she could keep the Catholic faith or not, just as she might choose. And Marie, quick to detect these misgivings in a letter from Sœur Julie, wrote to her every day for a week to prove her faithful remembrance of the friends in the convent. "My governess is a Catholic," she wrote, "and she must accompany me whenever I go out to church—and church is very near. And then, listen, Sœur Julie. I am going to a convent in Washington in the fall—the course is for six years there—but I am to come home or travel in the summers with Miss Sanders—she is the governess—and so you see that I will surely come down to New Brunswick before long. And when the tide is high in the Bay of Fundy, I will sail right out to our country home. Don't let all the laurel be out of bloom—the bush by the cool grotto in the woods, I mean. And Sœur Julie," she ran on in the same paragraph to an entirely foreign topic, "a family of Jews came to see Uncle the other night, three of them, an old man with long whiskers, quite as long as the hedge on the playground (pardon this little exaggeration, Sœur Julie); and Rebecca, his daughter, a very handsome girl with piercing black eyes and heavy black hair, came, too, a girl about my age, and I seemed to like her; but I did not like her brother

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Samuel, who was constantly going about the parlor looking at everything, and once he looked at me and mimicked his father, making a gesture about the big whiskers and rolling his eyes to make fun of his father. I didn't like that at all, Sœur Julie, and I think a boy of that kind will some day be very disrespectful to his father and bring about a world of trouble. But Rebecca was very modest, and seemed easy to please, though I noticed that she would not look long at my pretty pictures from the convent, nor the crucifix, and then she would be watching to see if her father was going to stay the long evening."

Then the letter read out a long enumeration of articles that Marie was going to prepare for the approaching school-year; and with equal readiness for another digression, the letter came back to the topic of the Jews' visit.

"And I almost forgot to tell you, Sœur Julie, that I thought myself the lady of the house, for Uncle is still away, you know; and I asked Mr. Steinberg—that is the name of this Jew with the big whiskers—I asked him if he wished me to set tea for him and Rebecca, and I mentioned Samuel, though I really wished him to have a whipping and be sent home to bed. But Mr. Steinberg arose at that and went for his hat, and when they were gone Miss Sanders laughed quite merrily, and said, 'Why, my dear, those are real orthodox Jews and they do not eat with Chris-

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tians.' And I thought that very strange, and Miss Sanders told me that real Jews could eat only *kosher*—that is how she spelled it, and it means clean food; and they never touch articles called *terefa,* which are unclean to them. But I would think Samuel ate nothing but this *terefa,* so ill-behaved was he, making fun of his old father; and he was mad, too, when they did not stay to tea."

And in this garrulous manner the letter ran on, and a dozen like it during the summer.

Marie, according to her instructions, left Boston toward the end of August with Miss Sanders. Rebecca Steinberg was the only person who felt lonely at Marie's departure. The Steinbergs lived in a large house very near Mr. Ruhlman's, and there were no restrictions placed upon the playtimes and associations of the two girls. Marie often got the father's permission to have Rebecca come in the automobile with herself and Miss Sanders, but she never dared, after the instruction on Jewish customs in food, to invite her little neighbor to tea again.

"Your uncle sometimes comes to supper at our house," Rebecca ventured to say one afternoon when Marie was departing. "Perhaps he will bring you, Marie, when he comes home."

"I should love to come," Marie answered brightly, doubtless also with a desire to see which foods were *kosher.*

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"Samuel will be away then," added Rebecca, who with feminine discernment knew how Marie regarded his distasteful manners.

"Samuel going away?" queried Marie in a tone which intimated that this was good news.

"Yes, to a boys' school. Father wants to make him grow up strict in our religion, and he is afraid Samuel is getting wrong ways. So father is going to make him stay five or six years in school, and after that to take him to Palestine, I guess."

"But we can not force religion on people, can we, Rebecca?" Marie had the air of a grandmother in the remark. "But your father must know best what is to be done with Samuel. I surely would not want him to be a Christian unless he was willing and perfectly obedient."

"And will you come to supper then with your uncle?" asked Rebecca, who found in Marie her first playmate.

"But Uncle is not coming home till October, and I shall be away at the convent in Washington," was Marie's reply, done in the manner of a little distress over the disappointment.

And with much more of these ordinary little dialogues August passed and the day for parting came. Marie said good-by, ready to go off to new scenes, and full of expectancy now that her new lot in life was so wonderful to her; while Rebecca went sadly back to the solemn, shady

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rooms of her house, to the religious readings and prayers and ceremonies which took place there, and of which she had nobody to tell.

II

Five years of new associations, of new studies and acquaintances and friends came to Marie before her uncle planned to give her a holiday in Europe. She was now in her twentieth year. The years had come and gone, and though she always returned to Boston for the Christmas holidays and part of the summer vacation, she saw very little of her uncle. In a most natural way he would dispatch a note to her with a regret that he had to go west or south or north upon some business. She never imagined that he was anxious to elude her. Not even when she met him one summer day in town—when she thought he was in Chicago—did she deem it strange or remarkable; and he stepped into the automobile with her and Miss Sanders in a most matter-of-fact way, and chatted very brightly with them till they reached the station, where he boarded a train for New York. Marie was a thousand miles from suspecting that her uncle wore a studied manner during the entire incident.

A secret was locked up and hidden deep down in the heart of Mr. I. Ruhlman. If he told it to his world to be rid of it and breathe easier, and even if men and women believed his narration, as

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they ought to do, knowing the truthful Ruhlman, there would have been embarrassing consequences. Under the thin veneer of apparent credulousness, however, people might perhaps go away scoffing in their hearts; derisive smiles and sneers, as he fancied, might illustrate the talk of gossips about the town. And from whispering suspicions the scorching noonlight of their talk might blaze into open condemnation. "It was a plausible story," perhaps he should hear them muttering, showing the whites of their sanctimonious eyes; "but why did he conceal it so long? Is it a story of blood-money, after all, worthy of a scene beside Shylock?" Or again, as the fable ran on, increasing always: "There are lives to be accounted for. What about Marie's father? No word was said about her mother. His story may have chapters that he has omitted—well, perhaps unwittingly—but he has omitted them."

No. Mr. Ruhlman would not give the information to the world that lived about him. After all, they were only acquaintances; his association with them was principally upon things of trade—perhaps an hour at the club now and then—yes, a few of them he had invited for dinner and an evening at the Brookline house; but they were refined enough to mind their own business; he was anxious that they should do so. If any of them were curious to know something about the beautiful little niece, "whom several of the girls

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had met and liked immensely," he had an adroit manner to slip away from the subject. Before long Marie herself would learn a story that was part of her life, and she could tell it or keep it, as it pleased her resolution. Mr. Ruhlman would still be loyal and devoted to her.

And now that Marie was close upon womanhood, with strength of character accompanying her health and education, Mr. Ruhlman wrote out, with a careful hand, a statement that concerned her, his reputed niece. The proper time had not yet arrived to have Marie read this burning chapter of her biography, which the mysterious letter contained.

Even the man from the census bureau, when he came to the Ruhlman home one day in Marie's vacation, went off with three-fourths of his report a mere guesswork. Marie was at home when he called, and for the first time in her life she had to read questions which she had never thought upon.

"I must appear a woman trying to evade a discussion of ages," she smiled, as her eye caught the printed directions before some of the blank spaces. "Perhaps you can find a former record that Uncle made. He could surely tell."

"He was absent ten years ago, as I find here noted," replied the man. "A servant could say nothing but—let me see"—and he ran his finger over the package of cards—"that Mr. Ruhlman

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was about fifty years of age. No mention is given of relatives here."

"Oh, but I was at school in New Brunswick then," promptly answered Marie. And without a pause, which might look very odd to the man, she concealed her embarrassment and straightway filled out the lines as best she could, saying of Mr. Ruhlman that he was American, and sixty years of age, and that she, too, was American—her birthplace—well, she had to pause; but she covered up the hesitancy by asking, "Is this the line here?" and then wrote "Boston." And when she came to her own age, being a woman, she had another pause; and the census-man did not hear her whispering, "Let me see—in New Brunswick, Sœur Julie said I was fourteen, fifteen—and five years in Washington." She wrote with a cool, deliberate hand, "Nineteen."

The man went off with his bundle of statistics, and Marie, while superintending the rearrangement of her baggage for Washington, went for a few minutes to her desk, and met her own novel question, somewhat startling, too, it was: "Where may I find my baptismal record? Why, how strange that I never thought of such a thing before. Where was I baptized?"

There was a flurry in her thoughts, as you could tell by the way her hands went nervously over her eyes and then more nervously into the papers on her desk with no hope to find the

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required information. "Surely I must have been baptized," cried her little worried mood; she recalled a lesson in catechism about the necessity of being baptized before one receives the other sacraments. And she would certainly have spent the entire day and night in manifest disturbance of mind, wondering why she had never heard talk of a godfather and godmother or of the priest who had baptized her. But her maid came running up to say that the things were in the car at the door waiting for her.

Here was the playful, light-hearted Marie suddenly shaken out of her long, uninterrupted years of unconcern. In a sense her childhood was gone, though she was not engaged in a troublesome analysis of herself. Yet—and this was all so new a phase of life to her—here she was, by one turn of the wheel of fortune, glancing at the past, at only one little dim place upon the far horizon; how very singular the prospect looked at her brief glance. Soon she might go back, on over the hills for clearer views of her own home country and the people who lived there, and her father and mother—how came she to womanhood without even asking about them! Yes, surely Marie had suddenly grown out of girlhood. It was a woman's eyes, all the more beautiful now in their tint of sudden perplexity and slight alarm, it was a woman's eyes that looked back at Marie from the reflection in the car window,

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as the train sped over the flat meadows and marshes of New Jersey, on past the cities and the towns to Washington.

It was a woman's face, too, that greeted the welcoming nuns in the convent parlor. Through Marie's merry salutations they could read; and they found that some lines were new upon the beautiful countenance; the lively, bright face was a little paler, a degree of the red gone from the cheeks, a faint, vanishing pink there instead. The black-arched eyebrows hung more thoughtfully over the eyes, and stayed their wonted dancing merriment; and the little red mouth which had served so many humorous mimickings, which in the hours of play could go on and on with the music of a purling brook in the sun, was now bright-voiced enough, and just as musical, but not so vivacious; the brook was running through a shaded woodland.

"You are not tired, my dear?" queried the nun who sat to talk with the popular pet of the school.

It was not a remarkable question, this, that people in all walks of life hear a score of times every day; but it was entirely new to Marie's ears, and significant, therefore, to her who before this was never considered a possible victim of fatigue,—Marie the tireless one, who had even in early years taught her feet and hands the endurance of ten hours of play upon the field or

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in the yard whenever so long a play-day occurred. They had seen her in Washington spend a morning at golf, and take the afternoon for uninterrupted tennis. But nuns do not ask thoughtless questions, said Marie; some expression upon her countenance must have elicited the query.

Accordingly, to divert the nun from further feeling of solicitude, Marie with a playful gesture ran the tips of her fingers over her face, and with a tuneful laugh said, "There, is it gone now, Mother, dear?"

Presto! It was gone, and Marie was soon out in the corridor greeting all her friends, hearing from every end of the building the gladness of voices calling out, "Oh, here is Marie Ruhlman."

There was, however, a touch of anxiety in Marie's later thoughts, not brooding grief, but a haunting shadow of solicitude, which grew with the days, causing her to step aside from the ranks of play and move up the line to where age was engaged with thoughts and retrospect. She could almost detect her new seriousness in a letter to Sœur Julie, though with studied care she sat down to write in her most youthful manner. She went on to tell of the September weeks in Boston, and then, instead of beginning a new topic with, "Now, Sœur Julie, listen. Oh, pardon my wild hurry to tell you that I am going to Europe," she introduced it sedately with, "I am so sorry that I shall not complete the year at the convent.

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Uncle sent a note to tell me that after the New Year he wants me to go to Europe. He said in his droll way that I am now a woman—he even mentioned my age, as if to advertise me as an old maid into the bargain, and he added, too, that by the time I return from Europe he will have done with his travels, and his business, and that we two may then return to Boston and live together; and I wonder why he said, 'If Marie wishes it'? Perhaps he thinks that I may prefer to come back here to finish the course.

"I shall have ample time to tell you of the proposed trip and all the plans which Uncle will arrange so precisely.

"And it will appear strange, perhaps, dear Sœur Julie, to ask you now if I was baptized at the convent. You were not there when I came, but you will easily find out from Mother Superior."

A week later Sœur Julie's letter came, full of talk about places in France which Marie was to visit—some of them very dear to Sœur Julie, because one was her childhood home, and her school, and the village with the little theatre where she saw, oh, the picturesque pantomimes and plays which she had so often recounted to Marie; and then there was a little convent at Claireville where she had pronounced her vows, and, alas, whence she was driven out with the other Sisters twelve years ago, and sent over the ocean, if they

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wanted to live their religious ways. "Poor France," said the letter, and Marie lifted the page and kissed it because of Sœur Julie's grief in the reminiscence.

And the letter went on to say that the little convent in Claireville was again inhabited by the nuns, even by some of them who had been comrades with Sœur Julie. "I think some great American lady brought them back—as I have heard—thanks to God; and Marie will go out to see them and say that Sœur Julie is happy even if an exile, and that she prays for poor France. Marie will go out and see the little house, and the roses in the west garden, and perhaps the quaint pear-trees are there, the branches like a vine trained along the wall. And perhaps you will meet the good American lady, whose name I do not know."

Yes, Marie would surely go, said her loving whisper. She did not surmise that an invitation was soon to come from the American lady of the Chateau d'Anters.

"And about the baptism—why, yes, I found out," the letter added. "Yes, indeed, Marie was baptized here; but conditional Baptism, as they were not sure, and your uncle did only say to Mother Superior to do as she thought best—and the Chaplain proposed conditional Baptism."

This was enough to cast a further set of questions into Marie's startled mind. The letter

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dropped from her hands; her face fell into a deeper cast of that growing seriousness. What was the matter? The question came up with a deep sigh. Even her uncle did not know about her baptism, and all these years it had never come into her happy heart to find out any of these things from him. He had been so good to her; why had he been so good to her? And yet he had always, always to be away when she was at home. Was there something that he was afraid to tell, if not out of his lips, at least through his eyes, should Marie be there to look at him? And a thousand other perturbing fancies would have been born of her present mood had not a classmate with a laughing call rushed in a great flurry down the corridor and into Marie's room to take her away to the football game at Georgetown.

"Dear me, we are late!" and "Dear me, we shall lose the first quarter!" and "Dear me, can you run a bit, Marie?" were a few of the thousand exclamations sounding along the way.

The game and the bracing air gave Marie a healthy change. The foolish questions were gone; the girl, happy and full of the fresh vigor of her school-life, was back in her laughing heart. The present had so much for her earnest attention; later she could have long chats with her devoted uncle. Did he not intimate this in his letter? And see what his last note proposed. "You will enjoy the large holiday in Europe. I

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have nearly all the details arranged. Yes, dear, you must see the convent in Claireville. And how interesting is the coincidence. For I have a very hearty invitation for you from this 'great American lady' whom Sœur Julie mentioned. She is the Marquise d'Anters. She expects you —and if you knew her, you would count upon enjoyment at the Chateau in Claireville. Beware of her son Maxwell, who is called the Viscount. He is entirely in love with you, all of his heart, eight or nine years old, is at your service. He, for some reason, is constantly on the watch for your coming—a playful, ingenuous lad, and you will soon be in love with him. I learn all this from a Mr. Harry Crawford, who came to see me a week or ten days ago. This Mr. Crawford is engaged upon a book—a young author, a year or two older than you, and he has been to Claireville, and will be there in the spring again. Perhaps you will meet him. I am to see him again this evening to get the plan or the general drift of a book on which he thinks I can help him on a point about Jews. I know only a detail of his theme, but if he puts the story into proper shape it may be a book to startle America. There, that sounds big, Marie; I must cut away the apparent tone of exaggeration and say that if Americans will read the book when it comes through, they will find themselves sitting up and thinking hard. We have religious novels by the

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score—a new one every two years, dealing with the Church in a sentimental way, very dogmatic, too—witness Churchill's 'Inside of the Cup,' and Deland's 'John Ward, Preacher.' But these novels are only skin-deep; they do their reforms around empty churches, and build arguments in sand. They do not start right; they act like a doctor who should try to give health by painting his invalid's cheeks.

"There, Marie, pardon me for this lengthy digression. You will doubtless hear more of the book—perhaps from Crawford, though he is not a boaster or a preacher; he can drop his book, talk, and live a healthy, sociable hour and listen if his companion is interesting. I am to have him meet and know the Steinbergs. He shall not fall in love with Rebecca, poor thing; the father will see to that. The father dotes upon Samuel; thinks that Columbia will make him a leader, a great Israelite for Zion.

"But, here, I must stop. When did I write so much? It may make amends for my tardiness toward your last interesting letter. You have but a short time before your return—and then comes Europe—*'post Alpes, Italia,'* you once wrote me from some Latin text you were studying."

And the letter was signed "Your devoted Uncle Ruhlman," and Marie read it all over again and even a third time, and then synopsized

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it for Sœur Julie, so that the little New Brunswick convent might take interest in the Marquise d'Anters and the little lover of a Viscount, and Harry Crawford, who was getting a great book ready.

There was another letter written for Marie, not in typewriting, but entirely in Mr. Ruhlman's own hand, nervous, and trembling at the history it had set down, the story that in one or two of the introductory points Ruhlman was ashamed to tell. But these had to be given in their bare, hard truth; the rest was easier to speak about, and Ruhlman's hand was not halting in this latter portion of the narrative. There, it was completed, not a necessary detail omitted; a lawyer could not have found a line to make clearer or to amplify. The signature was done in a bold, confident stroke of the pen, this time without the accustomed phrase, "Your devoted Uncle Ruhlman," but with a new one, "Faithfully yours, I. Ruhlman."

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CHAPTER V

HARRY CRAWFORD'S BOOK

I

THE brief excursion in Europe gave Harry Crawford a set of high hopes for his literary undertaking. He returned to Boston with a degree of elation which was heretofore unknown in his life—the nearest approach to it being the enthusiasm which he felt a few years before as one of the "backfield" on the Harvard football team during the week preceding the game with Yale.

At school and college Harry Crawford exhibited always a moderate temper for his studies; he was faithful to requirements, without breaking his head or wearing his heart out with anxiety. Deans and proctors never had occasion to trouble him; they would have easily lost sight of him in the great rolls of names if they had not the shorter list of athletes constantly before their eyes in the morning and evening newspapers. As a member of four societies, Harry was quite intimately known to several groups of the student body—but in no extraordinary way; just as in his classes, he was rated as "fair," neither shining high up or wilting at the end. In Freshman he published occasional verses in one of the

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college journals, and was called, in consequence, by a few who knew him, "Harry Hexameter." In Senior, the same few hailed him as "Harry Halfback."

The future caused Harry Crawford no greater concern than the present. Habit had settled upon him the temperament of content—a good, commonsense fidelity to the duties of the day, and no solicitude for the high places. Mountain tops have their uses, he might be supposed to say, and if one has to scale them, well—who goes slowly goes wisely and far. Yet, when necessity demanded, he was capable of higher energy, both mental and physical. The winning of a permanent place on the football team, out of a long "string" of candidates, argued for his muscular ability; and to show how sedulously he could remain at his desk and books, he had only to bring forth a paper which he wrote during his Junior year—an essay of seventy pages upon the campaign of Titus against Jerusalem. Here was a task that filled two months with reading and writing, and left him with a hundred pages of notes, even after the paper was written.

He went through college without forming any definite thoughts about his work in after life. He possessed an income which assured him of his daily bread. His father and mother were dead; an aunt and uncle in the far West were rich in

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their own right, and they knew that Harry had enough from his father's estate to keep the wolf many miles from the door. Yet in the course of events, and perhaps because it was "the proper thing" to have some occupation, Harry Crawford, toward the close of his college course, set his eyes and thoughts with some degree of definiteness toward the future. To a few of his more intimate acquaintances he hinted about the possibility of his going into the army; the salary would not be an incentive, but the studies at West Point and the healthy life of discipline would be reward enough. Patriotism, too, might some day issue a call for his services.

Hints of other prospects came and went, and Harry, with no other resolution than "to do something," was graduated from college and took a suite of rooms far out on Beacon Street. Ample facilities for out-of-door exercise were within a half mile of his door, and a comfortable library room which he fitted up overlooked the picturesque reservoirs, putting into his thoughts a prophetic whisper about grand days and nights with books. Yet he could not settle down to a course of "absolute do-nothing ease," as he termed it. He felt restless at the prospect, and early in August, before he went upon his trip through Canada, he accepted the position of assistant athletic coach at Holy Cross. This was an outlet for his desire to work, and it pleased

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him in a hundred ways. The new environment, together with the totally new views he acquired about life, engaged his attention even as much as his athletic work. He knew well the society of the world in which he had lived, but here were new phases of life, all the more engaging in their interest because they represented heart and not mere intellect, genuine social relations and not a bloodless code of conventionalities and official *sang-froid.* The long stretches of the terraces, the buildings with their lofty towers and the throngs of students coming and going through the halls and campus gave a picture of a city set upon the hill; but to Harry Crawford the vast scene at Holy Cross appeared more like home with simple, pleasant domesticities, one large family, not separated in exclusive sets and societies, but a great, happy unit full of mental and physical health. It was this phase of life in the new environs that appealed to Harry Crawford; and the football season had not ended before he felt a new impetus given to his own life, an inspiration which his obvious advantages of money and former acquaintances could not give him. He was not reticent upon this point even at the Harvard Club during the following winter. "I can not explain what a hold the college got upon me," he said enthusiastically to those who were gathered in reminiscence of the months away from Harvard.

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Yet keen as was his pleasure over his work at Holy Cross, Harry did not renew his engagement the following summer. From time to time during the past year he had heard his friends in Boston remark, sometimes even to himself, that "Crawford ought to get down to business. His little dilly-dallying in athletics is below a fellow of his possibilities."

And then, strange enough, after one of his gymnasium classes during the winter at Holy Cross, Harry met one of the Fathers of the college faculty. He had long since grown intimate with several members of the faculty, admiring in them that devoted interest which they manifested even out of class in all the affairs and problems of the students and their activities. Consequently, in the conversation which took place upon that winter evening, Harry found himself with youthful naïveté telling the priest of his own little achievements at college, and how among the subjects which had served his interest was one upon the history connected with the destruction of Jerusalem. Heartily enough Harry was invited to take a corner of the priest's library at any time and continue his readings upon that historical event.

"There are Zionist conventions a-plenty down there in Boston," said the priest with a smile, "and you may be curious to follow their proposals to rebuild their Zion—whether in Jerusalem or

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some part of Egypt. You will find it interesting perhaps."

No word was spoken about the religious consideration of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, for the priest felt that Harry Crawford was probably without any religion, or that he was at best a Christian of a vague, indefinite type. However, in the later months, they touched upon the religious bearings of Harry's reading, as they were compelled to do if they pretended to be thorough, yet analyzing as if it were profane history all that concerned Christ and the Christians.

Here it was that some new and prevailing impulse entered Harry Crawford's life. His years and ways of self-content dropped from him like a discarded garment. Like a new man, surely a man with some deep purpose at heart, he went down the long lane under the sparkling stars of that cool spring night, with more than his accustomed exuberance of physical life in his every movement, but with such thoughts running in his head that he seemed even to himself already a force in life; this new ambition which now absorbed his mind and body gave him a bearing that was gallant and impressive and made even the night show a dawn of greater serviceableness and dignity. It was not a pose nor emotionalism; it was healthy *élan,* not fully explicable, but refreshing and hopeful.

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Out upon the street, the clanging, raucous noises of the cars and wagons had the effect of driving away the glow of his pleasurable mood; for a half hour he was again in line with the humdrum march of ordinary things along the crowded streets. But at the square downtown, the high thoughts rushed back to him, and he went on across the little pathway with the elated airs of a man home from far-off conquest. The streets seemed more than usually brilliant; the lighted designs upon the façades of the buildings were pictures to his glancing eyes; the rows of lamps along the pathways appeared to run forward to meet him; those at a distance peeped through the waving branches of the trees to show that they were speeding him onward to his great enterprise.

The exalted aspirations and the elated mood accompanied him all the way to Boston, growing sturdier in his fine, strong mind as the train sped along, by the groups of flashing lights and through the cool, solemn darkness of the night.

II

"Why doesn't Crawford settle down to something worth while?" would be asked no more. As the weeks went on his plan for a great work grew toward definite shape. He had arranged and rearranged a dozen times his notes upon the historical events in which he had become so intensely

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interested. He must throw his argument into the form of a historical romance; an essay would be so many papers of print, and nothing more, to be left where the publisher would send them, without purchasers or readers. Yes, a story would be the thing. He must begin training for that, to search out men and manners and incidents and a suitable girl for somebody's love and somebody's jealous hatred. Harry smiled as he recalled a statement by the priest at Holy Cross that "a French novel or a French play still maintains three unities, two of them are a man and a woman in love, and the third is another man or woman who loves or hates the other man or woman."

Very cautious was Harry about acquainting any of his friends at the Harvard Club with the news of his plans. "Harry Hexameter doing a book!" What a hearty laugh would follow that comment. That he should confine himself in a close room with a pen for a year was more than their wildest dreams would ever forecast. They should not have their laugh, Harry said good-naturedly; and if the *magnum opus* was realized in a year or two, he would give them a good chance for surprise and laughter to their hearts' content.

In declining the position of athletic director at Holy Cross for the following year he wrote a hearty letter to one of the Fathers at the col-

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lege. "I am not accepting the kind offer from the college. I do this at a great cost to my heart and feelings. Somehow the life there took hold of my best affections, and I hate to think of leaving. But I must get down to something that may be a life-work. What it will be I know not. The financial problem, if you will pardon what seems a boast, does not trouble me. I am not going to die for frenzied fortune. I have had an offer from a big house for a post in the Far East, or to be agent for their affairs in Brazil. But I find that my heart wants to stay nearer home. If I take to the pen (don't smile at the prospect of a football man going into letters), I will have occasion to come up and consult your books. For the present, even though it appear a procrastination, I am going for a short holiday in Europe."

This hint about writing was all that Harry Crawford volunteered to give to anybody on this side of the Atlantic. When he reached London and sat conversing with Lady McCornish, "the dear friend of his dear mother," he got heart to say that he was working upon a romance, and that he wanted a holiday for sight-seeing before he took up the pen. Lady McCornish did not flout the youthful complacency that accompanied the remark. To a stranger she might have exhibited her London scorn of American letters; but this was a child of her dear friend, this was

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the boy she had entertained years ago on her Lancashire estate. Lady McCornish had words of earnest encouragement for "this dear boy." She would take him to a round of house-parties, introduce him to everybody worth knowing, tell him the phrases and mannerisms of the "circles," and make the poor, heartless ladies stare at him as she remarked, "Mr. Crawford's new book will doubtless contain some vivid American pictures of dear, detestable London."

And then his introduction as an author was handed on to Paris and put into the hands of Madame la Marquise d'Anters to be circulated abroad over Europe, and in time to be sent by her, with emphatic assurance that Harry was a great writer, to Mr. I. Ruhlman of Boston.

By the well-meant enthusiasm of these women, all unconscious of the embarrassment that they were causing, Harry Crawford was pushed across his Rubicon. There was no turning back; kindly eyes were looking after him from Europe, and hands were waving him on. Bands of music were playing high among the clouds; cavalcades swept by on the winds, their white plumes and long, streaming pennants waving in the air; great medieval towers loomed upon the hills, and down from the lofty casements ladies looked radiantly out upon gallant knights in a tourney. The air was fresh with youthful voices; a buoyant heart was in every creature, and lambs walked fear-

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lessly beside lions in a jungle. Through clefts in the great hills of time, pageants from various nations came marching onward, with their standards and costumes in picturesque splendor—Parthians and Medes and Elamites, dark-skinned Indians and little yellowish Mongolians with slanting eyes, and choruses of holy maidens chanting an old religious hymn in the shade of a great cathedral, and one beautiful Jewish girl with disheveled hair and torn clothes ran sobbing from the burning temple in Jerusalem.

Through a score of such fancies Harry Crawford rode back over the sea to Boston, resolving that, despite his enthusiasm, he was going to keep his purpose to himself. Mr. Ruhlman, through a note from d'Anters, was doubtless by this time acquainted with a young author's project; but there the information would terminate; that is, unless—and Harry Crawford caught the playful humor of his own surmise—"unless that niece of his, Marie, of young Maxwell's talk, is at home." She might be allowed to listen to the parleys, and throw in the merry sallies of a lively girl, perhaps a lovely and lovable girl, too.

And Harry Crawford managed to keep his secret; people should not be put in a position to twit him, if, after all, his project passed like a dream. There were evenings at the club, and several social meetings at homes and hotels; but

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woman or man had nothing startling to learn from him. They took, as a matter of course, his gracious vivacity and his occasional remarks about his recent outing in London. To none of them did he say a word about the unique Chateau d'Anters.

Upon a December evening he shut himself into his study to make preparations for his work. He had to marshal into order his great array of indefinite notions, the fancies and the conjectures and bits of information, to brace them up and set them on their feet and get them ready to walk in the direction he would map out for them. He arranged his books and charts of the Holy Land; he placed his reading references within reach of his hand; he filled a bracket hanging near his desk with photographs of people and places—a gallery of pictures of scenes in Palestine, reconstructed temples, Jewish and Roman types of men and women, high priests and lowly peasants, in and out of cities on their festive days; large-muscled soldiers of the Cæsars standing firm as adamant, waiting with hard, determined faces for the word to move on with their eagles and fasces to enforce the command of imperial Rome.

III

Mr. Ruhlman, as Harry guessed, had received a breezy letter from Madame d'Anters, full of glowing exaggeration about the young author.

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Harry went off with his own note written by the Marquis to Ruhlman's downtown office, and was cordially invited to dine a few evenings later at Ruhlman's house. The enthusiasm of the Marquise was contagious even by means of a brief note, and Ruhlman was led to anticipate an enjoyable hour with the young man.

"He is engaged upon a new book, one that will be sincere and thrilling, I have no doubt," the letter read; "and you, dear Mr. Ruhlman, who have traveled the world as if it were but a thoroughfare between your house and office, will be able to give Harry Crawford a thousand suggestions and the lay of a thousand lands. And he wants to learn the Jewish temperament"; whereupon Ruhlman smiled, though this last sentence did not argue conclusively that Madame considered him a Jew. "Perhaps you can arrange to obtain for him a study in that field; doubtless you know some real Jews in Boston.

"Finally, as your dear, charming niece is booked to visit d'Anters this winter, see that she will be able to tell us a great deal about Crawford's story. She ought to help him manage the love scenes in the book."

"I hope our good friend, Madame d'Anters, does not expect too much from your visit to this prosaic place," Ruhlman said with good grace, wishing to make it easy for Harry to introduce his subject, after the preliminary salutations had

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been exchanged and some general topics touched upon.

"She has probably enlarged in her hearty way upon my intentions and prospects," Harry replied. Mr. Ruhlman's affable manner and kindly voice put him at ease; yet he was timid enough about alluding to his project to anybody in America, hoping that even now in the presence of one who knew about it under a flare of trumpets from the Chateau d'Anters it could be proposed and dismissed in a few modest words. "It really is to be nothing but a first attempt at a story—a novel, if you will," he said, with a deprecating shrug of his shoulders. "I need have so many misgivings over the outcome, and consequently I have kept my nearest friends in town from hearing about it."

This appeared to Ruhlman to be but modest self-depreciation; and in the light of this interpretation he admired his young visitor. Such reticence and reserve was not usual in American literary circles.

"Your attitude is an earnest of success," he said in kindly sincerity. "Your anxiety about the results will undoubtedly spur you on to splendid endeavors. I see in one short glance that you are bent seriously to the task; you have not rushed your material into print in a night, as so many Americans do; and again you show sanity on this point about Jews. Doubtless you want to

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be accurate in what concerns their domestic and religious customs."

"Precisely," said Harry, with glad eyes.

"And I wish other writers were minded that way; namely, to get facts and not prejudiced imaginings, which we so often find in religious novels. I suppose there is not one little American scribbler who would not undertake to tell us all about Catholics and their lives, though he has never gone on the side of the street where there is a Catholic church; and he would dare to describe a home in Babylon without even looking at a historical note upon this subject. You are wiser; you wish to get some impressions true to life." Mr. Ruhlman was evidently pleased at Harry's coming to inquire about Jews; he readily manifested his sympathy. "I very fortunately can supply you with some pictures of real Jews—a real orthodox son of Israel with his two children, though these young people, painful to the old man, give signs of lacking enthusiasm in the cause of Zion."

"That is a family more apt for my purpose," Harry said with a bright voice across the dinner-table. "You see, Mr. Ruhlman, I have no imagination; I need facts and plenty of them; I can not construct material out of a few gleams and flashes of imagination; I must have things brought directly to my five senses, so dull am I."

"Perhaps you will find ample material at

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Steinberg's, if—" and he hesitated, tapping his finger-tips upon the cloth; and then making ready to leave the table. "I hinted that one of Mr. Steinberg's children, the young man, Samuel, is not at home. Steinberg holds fast to the old traditions—laugh at them, the world may—and he is a prominent benefactor to the Zionist movement, though he holds out for the return to Jerusalem rather than for a colony in Egypt. But this young son of his—I think I read more of him than his father does—comes back a religious scoffer from Columbia. The father imagines that the large lists of Jewish names in the New York colleges speaks eloquently for Zion's prospects. Samuel will soon shatter his hopes, I fear. And he is, moreover, in a spirit to become a rank Socialist, if I have gathered right conclusions from a few remarks he made. Yes, indeed," Mr. Ruhlman showed visibly that he felt deep sympathy for old Steinberg, "this young rascal Samuel will break the old man's heart some day, and surely he will try to play havoc with his father's money. It may be my duty to inform the old man soon."

The two were by this time seated comfortably in Mr. Ruhlman's spacious smoking-room. Only one dim colored light was in the room, all the better for the view they could have out over the wintry landscape, as they smoked and talked. The wind whistled merrily down through the

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trees, and a few street lamps sparkled in the clear air. The reservoir, like a little lake at the foot of the estate, shook with rippling waters and gave back intermittent gleams of the cold starlight. Harry, during a pause in the conversation, went to a window to note with keener appreciation the contrast between the indoor warmth and the cold, wind-swept scene without.

Ruhlman came and stood beside him, and pointed to the left through the swaying traceries of the trees. "That is Steinberg's home, a spacious house, as you see, and splendid lawns, beautiful in the spring and summer. But it is American in its externals, excepting a few rare Eastern trees and shrubs; a gentile environment, a house of bondage, out of which he would go, if fortune favored him."

"Perhaps," Harry began hesitatingly, and with a manly meekness in his tone, "perhaps I should refrain from bothering the Steinberg family in their present circumstances. My silly observations might distress the old gentleman's mind. I can very well——"

"Nonsense," interposed the host. "He will, on the contrary, find consolation in your visit, especially since you will be affable enough to listen to his enthusiastic talk about Zion. He will talk freely when he realizes that you wish to learn something about the movement." And turning to a shelf of books, he added, "There are some

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sources of information to give you an intelligent part in the conversation. I'll send the boy with some of them to your room to-morrow."

Harry had nothing to say when his nodding head signified his ready acceptance of the offer.

"And it will be a genuine pleasure," Ruhlman went on, "for the sweet child, Steinberg's daughter Rebecca, to have a bit of modern society. I pity her. She has no associates among American girls, and Steinberg doesn't want the rank and file of Jewish girls with her—they are unorthodox, he says, and would contaminate Rebecca. Marie tries to see her during the vacation and is very good and kind and sympathetic to her. Marie would do more, but the father is so intolerant, for instance, on their religious customs at table—the matter of meat. You will possibly observe that and a hundred other oddities. So your visit will be a pleasure to Rebecca. She will be present if you talk about Zion; the old man will see that she will hear the conversation."

"And the young man, Samuel, whom you mentioned?" ventured a little interrogation. "Is he likely to come in? He would be an observation, if I may so put it."

"He will not be there," replied Ruhlman. "He is in New York, as I said, studying; at least the old man thinks so. I doubt if he will be allowed home during the approaching holidays."

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Clouds had drifted across the sky while the two men went on with their talk, arranging the plans by which Harry should find opportunities to visit the Steinberg home and enlarge his capabilities for the story. A little flurry of snow against the window attracted their attention and prompted Harry to start home.

IV

On that very night, in a smoky, noisy room in a crowded alley-way near Dover Street, a group of so-called Socialists was in session. The room was reeking with filthy air, thick and heavy. Unshaven faces, bedraggled, dark looks under low brows marked the majority of the gang. Dissonant voices and flat platitudes and perverted logic went around the room, some of them in dialogues and others from the lips of "soap-box orators," developed out of hateful imaginations.

After the wild, uncultured expression of their blatant theories, and a wild speech about "free love," two men swept aside to a small ante-room. It was a place and a time to inspire their foul talk and their hideous machinations.

One of these men was Samuel Steinberg, who was supposed to be at college in New York. He was attired in rough clothes, his loose flannel collar open at the neck to lend effect to the socialistic speech which he had just made. His face was

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perfectly suited for an audience of frowns and bloated lips and sottish eyes.

The other man, apparently older than the Jew, was Jack McSweeny. His clothes had seen better days; his face had long since lost all marks of refinement, as his heart had likewise discarded all respect for the decencies of life. You may see a picture of Jack in his old "prep" school journal, and note that he was a promising lad once upon a time—a firm mouth, a determined chin, and clear, open eyes under a fine forehead. But all these were battered back and made soft and loose now. His mother, poor thing, wanted her dear Jack to meet society, and she sent him to Harvard. Jack found it easy to tell fairy-tales, which in time proved to be a hideous dime-novel of his own composition. His mother died of a broken heart—"her own sweet fault," said the gracious son with a laugh up from his under-world. He might yet live to see Samuel Stein-berg's father, "Steiny's old gent," go the same way; so read the sneer of his lip and the disgust in his eye.

The two men closed the door of the ante-room, shutting out all the wild nightmare of the other chamber. Samuel's face showed white dread; Jack's lit up with hideous delight. They had to come to an understanding; Jack wanted to marry "Steiny's" sister, that was all; he would marry her according to his "Socialism." And

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Jack would see that Samuel Steinberg got Marie Ruhlman for wife, lawfully or not—he could have her, and Jack would help him as soon as Rebecca was his.

It was a successful Socialist meeting, so they said as they went down the dingy stairs into the snowy night.

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CHAPTER VI

THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS

I

Old Steinberg, shrewd and cautious enough in commercial life, was for many reasons liable to fall into a trap and be hoodwinked in his own house. They of his flock could be his readiest enemies, and Samuel was not obliged to employ consummate craftiness to dupe his father. He knew how to make the old man ride his hobby with eyes shut and unsuspecting.

In an extravagant and persistent manner, as the gentile world might adjudge it, the father was completely absorbed in his Zionist aspirations and religious observances; hope and zeal in their regard were the breath of his life. No jot or tittle of the old traditions escaped his notice. With reverence and unceasing devotion he would celebrate the chief Jewish festivals, though it was difficult at times to enact the intricate ceremonies, howsoever painstaking he was, in the deep, secluded chambers of his house. Day and night, with increasing hopefulness, he prayed from his modern land of bondage for the rebirth of Israel; "Our God, and the God of our ancestors! O, sound the great trumpet for our liberation; lift up the banner to collect our ban-

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ished people; gather our dispersed from among the nations, and assemble our outcast from the extremities of the earth; conduct us unto Zion, Thy city, with joyful song, and unto Jerusalem, Thy holy temple, with everlasting joy."

In an upper room, guarded sacredly, behind a *mezazza* fixed above the door, were kept all the paraphernalia for the rites and ceremonies—the ram's horn in its proper place might be seen, and the *tephillin,* and the curiously wrought brass lamp from Holland, which Rebecca had to light on the Sabbath. And even in the yard, like a spot in the vale of Hebron, were the trees, which Steinberg during the winter months tended carefully in the conservatory—olives, terebinths, and ilexes.

Though the father's rigid adherence to strict orthodoxy made Samuel rebellious in early years, the boy was cunning enough to discern that hypocrisy would serve him well. Out of the father's sight he could eat of the flesh-pots of Egypt, and enjoy any mess of the world's delectable foods. Only be patient at home, pretend to study the sacred books, be faithful to the various prayers, serve with the lips, though the heart is far away, and all would come lavishly to young Samuel. It was a paying game, as he estimated the reward; and he played his hypocritical programme to the limit.

He quickly perceived that he could enjoy the

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flesh-pots better if he were away from home; and under a skilful petition to pursue higher Hebrew studies, and advocate the Zionist propaganda among students, he obtained permission to go to New York, promising to seek out an orthodox family where he might safeguard his faith from the gentiles. Courses at Columbia could be found to prepare him for great things in the world, and from these courts of Pharaoh he would prove to his father's wild delight that the prayers for Zion were near fulfilment.

His schemes in New York brought him all he wished for. Elaborate letters full of enthusiastic prospects went home faithfully to his father, and pictures of the synagogues and of the East Side were sent with innocent prattle to Rebecca. During the vacation he regaled the old man's heart with incidents out of his religious life in New York. How delighted the unsuspecting father was with the "speech" which his son was reported to have made at an assembly of students, and how he read over and over again to Rebecca the paper which contained an extract of the son's oration:

"It is high time that the Jews should realize that few things do more to foster anti-Semitic feeling than the tendency to sail under false colors and conceal their true identity.

"The Zionists and the orthodox Jewish Nationalists have long ago won the respect and admira-

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tion of the world. No race has ever defied assimilation so stubbornly and so successfully; and the modern tendency of individual Jews to repudiate what is one of their chief glories suggests an almost comic resolve to fight the course of nature.

"Zionism seeks to establish in Palestine, for such Jews as choose to go and remain there, and for their descendents, a legally secured home, where they may live together and lead a Jewish life; where they may expect ultimately to constitute a majority of the population, and may look forward for what we should call home rule.

"The Zionists seek to establish this home in Palestine because they are convinced that the undying longing of Jews for Palestine is a fact of deepest significance; that it is a manifestation in the struggle for existence by an ancient people which has established its right to live—a people whose 3000 years of civilization has produced a faith, culture, and individuality which enable them to contribute in the future, as they have in the past, to the advance of civilization; and that it is not a right merely, but a duty of the Jewish nationality to survive and develop.

"They believe that there only can Jewish life be fully protected from the forces of disintegration; that there alone can the Jewish spirit reach its full and natural development; and that by securing for those Jews who wish to settle in Palestine the opportunity to do so, not only those

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Jews but all other Jews will be benefited, and that the long, perplexing Jewish problem will at last find solution."

Every night for a week the old man read this speech aloud. Money would not be stinted; Samuel could obtain all he desired for his zealous work in Zion's holy cause. Steinberg never surmised that his son had arranged the printing of these few paragraphs, knowing that they would give him a key at any time to his father's coffers. And he needed money for the other rôle. The red lights and the sparkling liquids and the gay companions in the halls of Pharaoh were expensive. "Steiny" would play second fiddle in no house of carousal; he would show the revelers that a Jew could lead the music and pay the piper handsomely. He knew how "to touch the old gent."

Wise as he was in his own generation, Steiny found somebody who was wiser, who could hoodwink him in turn; the boomerang of deceit could return and crack the young Jew on the head.

Jack McSweeny met Samuel Steinberg late one night in a Chinatown café. Steiny was in Boston for the holidays, and though the chopsticks and dishes in the restaurant were not an approved menu for an orthodox Jew, he had lost all scrupulousness over such things. Moreover, the food and drink were not the tame reason for alluring Steiny to Chinatown. Just listen to

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Jack McSweeny in his fine, nonchalant manner allude to rich delights such as he lived.

Jack had all the tricks of an artist in that kind of craft. Quick to perceive that young Steinberg was a college man, Jack led off with a few banal remarks upon athletics and societies. "Would Columbia have a crew this spring? Though a Harvard man," McSweeny uttered this portion of his biography for the tenth time, "I'll bet on Yale this year. Old bulldog Eli has the pick of them. Cornell ought to go back to the woods for a couple of seasons."

In due time Jack prattled up to livelier topics. He had Steiny's pulse after a few colloquies, and he quickly came to read his mind like a book. McSweeny was not campaigning for a few limited nights of dissipation. He wanted to hold a good hand and play the cards for a steady run of fortune. Steiny's ready pocketbook should be made to last long, even though there were several present drains from it. With persistent adroitness he fed the young Jew's body and mind upon circean delectables; and learning of the Zionist enthusiasm at the Steinberg home, he got hold of another serviceable card for his enlarged game. He borrowed some books from a library and sent them by Steiny to Rebecca. He could bide his time before he would besiege the fair young lady of the house.

"And who is the beauty that lives near you?"

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he asked one night, as he greeted Steiny and locked arms with him in the manner of boon companions.

"Marie Ruhlman; a beauty, hey, Jack?" young Steinberg replied, with an angular smile and a cackle in his throat.

"Seems so," said the other, pretending indifference. "Know her?"

"She's a highbrow toward me," answered Steiny with his nose sticking out of a long, drooping grin. "But she's more than sweet, hey, Jack? Sweet to Rebecca."

"Can't say," added the other; and then with a nasty leer in his eye he poked his companion in their manner of familiarity. Steiny, cackling again, said, "Go ahead and court her, Jack."

"No chance," replied Jack, fetching a hollow mimicry of a despondent sigh.

"Sure you have," said Steiny, prodding him again. "She's home from the convent now. You run in out of the rain some day to my house, give the salutation, *Shalom Alekem,* and my old man's piety will be touched and will entertain a stranger. Rebecca may be allowed to talk with you, and then, if you are clever, you may get her to introduce Marie. Lots of money in the Ruhlman bank."

"Let's talk of something more possible for my talents," said McSweeny with a sickly laugh, though he hid it from the young Jew. He was

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aware these many days that Steiny was a hypocrite at home, and ready for any gay time in town; but McSweeny was hardly prepared to hear his young friend bring forward his sister's name into this decadent irreverance. Of course, the Jew was only trying a bit of their salacious banter. Very well; he might have occasion to indulge in it later. Mr. McSweeny would lead the way; Steiny was only an undergraduate—he would learn; and Jack McSweeny was a post-graduate in the profession, knowing his encyclopedia well.

"Well, you've got a wife already, you mean, Jack?" Samuel broke the silence.

"Well, after a fashion," answered the other in a sneering drawl. "I don't know where she is just now." And stepping out more briskly, as he swung to a different topic, he started on a new line of talk which he had planned for this night's consideration.

"See here, Sam, about the Socialist movement I spoke of the other night. Why not get into it now? You'll find a lot of your people there to-night. You win a place in the ranks and I tell you that you'll advance yourself and make a name. You know all the pet phrases of the Jews. We need somebody to tell them the story about the downtrodden poor. Get into it, Steinberg. You can in time step into a prominent place that will pay you well."

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"The old man would kill me, or rather I'd kill him if he heard that I was not heart and soul in his cause." Steinberg held Jack's arm and showed visibly his fear. "He'd cut me off without a cent—never mention my name again."

"Come on, come on," Jack tried a light, cajoling laugh. "How is he to hear of your name? We change the name, that's easy enough. You can be any name you want, and get money for it, too, I tell you."

As they went on toward the café where they were to enjoy the night Jack succeeded in winning his campaign. He anticipated a lean and hungry winter, but with Steinberg near him, he could keep the wolf from the door. And with deft speech about future prospects for Samuel's welfare, he succeeded in persuading him to remain in Boston.

"You can run over to New York, arrange with some good old woman there to see that your mail is returned to you here. How is that, Steiny? It's cheaper here, and a better time thrown into the bargain. Wait till you meet the fellows in winter. Talk about it—well, wait till you see; I'll bring Marie and Rebecca down some night to hear you."

And Samuel was ready to see. He adopted a new name, and found it easy to travel under it; the districts which he frequented were not incredulous; pseudonyms and painted smiles were

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quite the vogue. The preparation for his career as a Socialist orator was not arduous; the stock-in-trade of cant phrases was as easy as a primer. He got them by heart; he had a face and a voice adequate for their expression.

"Don't bother about the psychology and the philosophy and the history of the thing," admonished McSweeny, when Steiny wanted to look over some books. "That goes well enough among the highbrows. We'll just keep down among the 'wind-jammers,' as they call us—the soap-box is a paying pulpit. Leave the book stuff to the swells. But even they"—and he began a diligent search in his coat pocket for some newspaper clipping. "See here, Steiny; read that. It shows that we can meet even the lords in the high places."

Steiny was reading a column torn from a magazine:

"A psychology so strong between the education at Harvard and the devotees of 'Mother Earth' was sure to come to fruit in reciprocal deeds. Yet no little flutter was created recently when the press reported that President-emeritus Eliot's grandson 'Sam' escorted Emma Goldman into the reception-room at the Harvard Union, where the 'friends of the movement' discussed the tactical issue which had separated the Anarchist from the Socialist wing, and the best

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method to be pursued in bringing in the 'free society,' which is the aim of both divisions of the revolution, even though they have occupied different fields ever since the Marx and Bakunin quarrel split the old 'Workingman's International' into two camps.

"Evidently the startled public had forgotten the shock it received when President Eliot's mansion was opened wide with hospitality for Gorky. Perhaps, with a flourish, meant to be a public rebuke, a pledge was given to the talented Anarchist that to Gorky the latch-string of the Harvard President's door should always be out. This courtesy was the more marked coming at the very time when Gorky's Boston lecture was abandoned because the doors of Tremont Temple were closed against him."

"Pretty good, hey, comrade?" Jack put his hand out to take the clipping. "We can look up, all right. But we are not seeking the favor of the bookmen, not we, Steiny. Let them argue it out. We'll stand with the people—there's our game; it pays, Steiny, when we get a start."

Jack McSweeny went on to enumerate the species of payments they would receive, running through a list of the pleasurable places and persons that would be at their service. "There you are, Samuel," he said, slapping his comrade on

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the back; "there you are," another slap, and the Jew's eyes leaped forward with keen expectancy. "Let's be immortal now, Steiny; drink and be merry, to-morrow we die."

It required but little effort on Jack McSweeny's part to make the susceptible Steinberg's heart go thumping with wild frenzy for their career as Socialists. His breath was hot for the programme; he had money enough to slake any present thirst; from his soap-box orations later he would double his salary, and balance it with expensive orgies. Jack would be his manager and pull the string. Jack was played out, had lost his hold on power in that part of the world. "The ladies were not friendly with him," though he did not let Steiny know. Wait till he flashed bright again in the light of money from Samuel Steinberg (alias Ernest Kaufman). His wife would come running back to him; but Jack would give her a marble stare and a sentence out of good Socialist doctrine. He had the quotation ready upon his tongue. "Perhaps this one from our leader Engels will suit her," he had already mused, as he read from Engels: "A positive cessation of fondness or its replacement by a new passionate love makes a separation a blessing for both parties and society." Having noted the utter degradation of Steinberg in his family relations, McSweeny was quick to feed his thoughts on the possibility of creating this new

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love with either Marie Ruhlman or Rebecca Steinberg.

"What'll we start with, Mac?" inquired Samuel with a grotesque imitation of good manners. "You're fit for a drink."

"Anything at all, Steiny, or Ernest, I must call you, if there are any of the pals in here," answered Jack, as the door opened, and he peered in cautiously.

"We'll start with the best," the other added, with a poor travesty of nonchalance.

"You are a born leader," said Jack with his ready flattery, as they drew toward a table, glancing to see whom they might invite with them. "And see what one of our late Socialist poets says:

"'And if I die, what shall to me
Hereafter then be shown?
Thou fool! Thy question has no sense!
Hereafter is on earth alone.'"

II

Marie Ruhlman was in no immediate danger of being wooed by Mr. McSweeny. She was enjoying the glorious autumn days at the convent in Washington, out on the pleasant hills of Georgetown. Moreover, Steiny, in the rôle of Ernest Kaufman, could not venture to take Jack to the Brookline district, for his father and sister were piously thinking all the time of Samuel in

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New York, and were gladdened by the occasional letters and glowing talks of their young champion of Zion. They never for a moment suspected that these letters were written from a reeking den in Boston, and forwarded to them via the old woman in New York; nor that their own earnest writings, containing the father's magnificent contributions to his son's lofty ambitions, were switched back to the lost son of Israel in Boston. There was urgent need for Samuel to conceal himself.

But Jack McSweeny was not obliged to keep under cover. He could sally forth into the open day and leave Steiny to enjoy the husks of pleasure, and then come back with telling flattery about the growing repute of Ernest Kaufman.

"You've got them, Steiny, my boy," Jack would begin, his red, waterish eyes and loose lips trying to give emphasis. "You've got them talking. Some of the fellows—the bunch of idealists that are fooling themselves with their high-sounding talk—they think that we are going too fast. But I gave them a straight answer, I did. They want a lot of guff about their kind of Socialism. Bluff, that's what all their prattle is, about labor problems and commission government and economic determinism, the materialistic interpretation of history, and theories of value and surplus value. Bluff! I told them so. That's what I told them."

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"They know that themselves, too, don't they, Jack?" interposed Steiny, warmed by his companion's fervid pretence at indignation, and desirous to show how an apt pupil followed his master.

Jack warmed himself with another glass of undiluted whiskey, and flung a salute to the cabaret dancers who were coming down the aisle. "Why, of course they know, if they would be logical, Steiny. Let them cherish their moon-faced doctrine, but if they will read well, and put off their pious frauds, they'll decide that you and I have already arrived where they are tending to come. We're ahead of them; they're coming. Let them follow out their Feuerbach and Marx and Bernstein to the bitter end, and they will discover that our short cut to the end is the logical thing. It all comes to what you and I know, Steiny—no shackles at all, anybody's money for us, and free love." He almost hissed these last words into Steiny's ear, and repeated them with a mad, wild gleam in his sottish eyes. "That's the beauty of it all, Steiny—free love."

The cabaret singers reached the table where Jack and Steiny sat. With smirking smiles and jaded antics the two dancers sidled along, singing—if the harsh, grating effort of their weary voices may be called singing—"I'm going to live anyway until I die."

Jack did not want to be bothered by them, and

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he flung a knowing glance at his companion. Steiny took out some bits of silver and tossed them to the singers, one of whom made a profound bow, and pulled the moustache which now Steiny was wearing in his rôle as Ernest Kaufman.

"Look at that," Jack began, as the dancers slipped along to the other end of the café. "See where society terminates? Yes, just as Socialism ends where we are, Steiny." He paused to have the glasses refilled, at the hospitable invitation of his companion. "Why, even Catholics have imitations of cabaret performances now in their swell gatherings. I read about one only the other night—a real swell Catholic affair; they are fascinated, too, by the latest social airs. Of course, the talent was from their own set. But let them go on with their society dresses and their love of vaudeville and their modern dances, and Catholics, too, will come in time to our cabaret, Steiny."

Steiny did not appear to care whether they came or not; an ample world was already at hand.

"Well, look over there," McSweeny was pointing to a new group of dancers who appeared out of the swinging half-doors. "One of those five girls was a Catholic. She lived near me in South Boston while I was going to Harvard. There she is. Her mother wanted her to meet the highbrows. Money was easy, and the girl had to

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follow all the fashions—society dress and the latest dances and swell friends. Well, there she is. She's a charming society girl now, Steiny," his sick smile turned into a sneer, "and we are the best of Socialists."

III

"What are you going to speak about to-night?" asked McSweeny an hour later. "Give it to them hot," he set his patronizing hand on Steiny's shoulder.

"Hot enough, I'm afraid," answered the young orator, as he reached into his pocket for his notes.

"Not on your life, Steiny; nothing is spicy enough. They are sick of the milk-and-water stuff of the temporizers. Hit out straight; we don't want the bookmen with us. We'll continue to lead the way. Socialism must necessarily arrive at our conclusions. They have to come to our position. And we'll scrape up the money ahead of them. I made them give us not less than twenty-five for each of your speeches this week. The people like to listen to you, and our bosses know it."

"Well, how will this strike them?" he asked slowly, his narrow eyes looking tentatively toward his preceptor.

Steiny went to a corner of the long room, stood on a box, and loosed his collar and necktie, ruffled his hair, and rolled up the rims of his sleeves.

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"All right," called out Jack, implying that Steiny's pose was sufficient for the Socialistic hustings.

Steiny tried to make his close-set eyes blaze with hatred; he set his flabby lips and loose jaws for lines of anger. "It's a little advanced, this is—war, you know," he called out to Jack, clearing his throat, and casting a knowing wink toward his censor.

"Go ahead," Jack shouted back. "It's Socialism, no matter what they say."

Steiny, with a gesture for silence toward an imaginary audience, began his speech, some jumbled paragraphs that he had committed to memory from a recent magazine.

"Hurrah for the roll of the drum," he cried out from the depths of his throat, leaning forward with his hand to his ear, as if to catch far-off sounds.

Jack applauded the pose and the oily, guttural voice. "Bravo!" he shouted.

Steiny began with a wide, embracing sweep of his arms:

"Sons of the Revolution are the hope of the human race. Palliative measures are useless. There can be no truce in the class war. The man who has money is your enemy. He is enjoying the fruits of your labor. He has not paid for it in toil, which is the only currency that bears

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the stamp of justice. In the gratification of his desires, the satisfaction of his appetites, the ministration of his sense of luxury, he is spending the money that has been taken out of the toiler in the mines, of the slave woman wearing out her life at the looms, of the child whose tender body is bound to the rack of labor and whose chance of life is denied by Capitalism. We who work and who recognize the lines of this warfare must fight without mercy."

He stopped to rub his bare hand over his sweating brow.

"Great," called out the audience, with all the applause McSweeny could make.

And Steiny went on, again with paragraphs which are the stock-in-trade of the soap-box orators.

"That's the stuff," said Jack, as he came up the room. "That's enough for now. Give them the entire speech to-night. I have to go out to see some of the fellows and tell them what a treat you have for them."

"All right, hey, Jack?" grinned Steiny, as he rearranged his clothes.

"It will bring you fame this week, old boy, and we'll gather in the good green dollars all right, all right."

Parting with his pupil, Mr. McSweeny patted him and whispered, "Next week we'll give them

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the talk on free love. I am going out to Brookline this evening and may see pretty Rebecca and that beauty of a Marie Ruhlman."

IV

A blood-red November moon, seen through a narrow vista at the end of the street, hung in silence on the horizon, across the clear, crisp air, when McSweeny reached the Common. He stood for a few moments, affecting a pose of deep deliberation, while he was deciding upon what course to take. He was not altogether serious in that last remark of his about Rebecca and Marie; but Steiny, in the warmth of his Socialistic study, had met the statement with apparent unconcern; absorbed in his recent declamation, he did not take time to heed what Jack muttered indistinctly going out into the evening air. Steiny felt assured that Jack would be alert for the meeting of the Socialists that night, and would drum into the dingy hall on the alley a throng to applaud the orator.

But the bracing air had a stimulating effect on Jack's thoughts. Across the Common the early night drew on. He beheld the hurrying figures as they passed within the patches of light under the sputtering electric lamps, and on into the inviting stretches of darkness. A delicious sense of anticipation and vague mysteriousness crept through him, and it soon grew to an intense long-

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ing for an adventure. Merry voices of the passers-by had contrary effects; some seemed to fall alluringly upon his hearing, others smote him as if in reproach. But the air was clear and bracing, and Jack walked slowly on toward the Mall.

Suddenly he turned as if to follow a new purpose, and he directed his steps toward a subway entrance. "For the fun of the thing and as a preliminary, suppose I really surprise Steiny with a story after his speech to-night. I'll go out and steal a look at Rebecca." His loose lips came together like a trap out of joint.

He pulled out his watch and glanced eagerly at it. He stepped briskly down the stairs, looked for a Brookline car through the garish light, a plan already formed in his fertile mind when he took his seat in the car.

"If the father and daughter are as easy as Steiny, I'll find them perfectly gullible," he mused. "Perhaps the other fair maid Marie may be there."

He knew where to dismount for the Steinberg house. He did not wait by the tall hedge to admire the exquisite scene, as the white, rising moonlight hung above the shimmering waters of the lake, and set the pathways in silent shadows. McSweeny had lost or had never acquired a faculty to delight in the beauties of nature. They were all moonshine to him—let the pedants rave otherwise—insipid talk, all this rot about undu-

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lating hills, chequered with the solemn lights and shadows, breathing with silent benediction, and the valleys rich with echoes from the music of the spheres. Bah! A painted moon in a theatre, and some good, lively music from the pit, and laces and ruffles dancing upon the stage—there was Jack McSweeny's Arcady.

He had to keep his wits. His entrance to the Steinberg mansion was to be unconventional. The prospect was thrilling enough in its novelty. It was an odd-looking edifice, he thought, owing to his ignorance about a Jew's dwelling, and then, too, long, spectral shadows ran up and down the façade, as he peered through the traceries of the high, leafless trees. He had his words ready; his talk must be brief, and let it be coherent. The old man might scrutinize him; but surely Rebecca would be guileless. Well, it would be a safe bit of fun to put through; it would give a zest to talk after Steiny's oration that night.

"Is Miss Rebecca Steinberg at home?" was Jack's bold question at the door.

Fortunately for him, the servant was not obliged to summon the girl or acquaint the father with the message. Rebecca chanced to be arranging some exotic plants in the deep recess of the hallway; hearing her name, she drew modestly toward the door, bidding the servant to remain.

"Your devoted brother, Miss Steinberg, is in-

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terested in some Zionist publications with which I, too, have associations," Jack began with a brave attempt to give as much dignity as possible to his looks and voice.

Rebecca bowed, and a light gleam of glad surprise passed over her countenance. Jack was wise enough not to scare it away by his staring; he was in a very strange atmosphere and before a little Jewish maiden who seldom spoke with men. Had he looked up he might have seen the deep black eyes wide open, their slight provocation of wonderment disclosed the full discs of the pupils, and the graceful lines of the mouth betrayed her eager expectancy. But Jack could mortify his desires and defer his study of the beautiful face till a more propitious hour.

"Samuel has done me a number of kindnesses," Jack went on with a pietistic drawl. "I insisted many times to be allowed to reciprocate. And finally he has consented to write," Jack made a clever search of his pockets for the pretended letter; "I must have left the letter on my desk—how thoughtless. Well, he condescended to allow me to invite you and your friend—let me see, Miss Ruhlman, I believe is the name—to invite you to the football game at Harvard."

"Miss Ruhlman is not at home," said Rebecca in an evident tone of regret, "though even if she were at home I could hardly accept your kind invitation. Father is rather reluctant about my

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going out to these big gatherings." It was all said with simple naturalness.

"So I understand from Samuel," replied Jack without any accent of criticism. "But this might be different, you know—the last game of the year, and Yale, too."

"Some girls whom I know are so delighted because they have obtained tickets—and I wish that Marie were here to accept your kind thoughtfulness." Her deep black eyes were all aglow, and the delicate rose tint upon her cheek grew richer, as she stood enjoying this unusual chance for conversation. She was sorry that there was no more to say—at least she could not invent topics and words out of her inexperience.

"I'll write Samuel to-night," she said as she turned; and then, glancing up, she caught the visitor staring at her, and her cheeks blushed quickly, the red leaping back to the temples under her rich black hair.

Jack was quick to perceive the embarrassment of the artless little maiden. Indeed, he was surprised at her unsophisticated simplicity in talking to him at all, with the very flimsy credentials he furnished for so audacious an entry and his subsequent proposal. He turned toward the door, and with his best attempt at gracefulness, he bowed to Rebecca, saying, "I hope my friend Samuel will not blame me for the disappointment. I owe him so much for all his kindnesses

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and for letting me take a little interest in his work."

Rebecca was not schooled for ready response. But she found a sweet voice to say, "But he will be home soon for the holidays and perhaps he will bring you out to enlarge upon the work, if you are interested."

This was catch enough for Jack McSweeny's first visit. His jaded heart went thumping at the exultant words—an invitation from Rebecca herself to come out with Steiny. He tried to put his thanks and farewell sentence together, and stumbled out the door.

"Marie Ruhlman is not at home," he conveyed the information to Steiny in a whisper, as if an important secret. But it was intended only as a bit of banter in their kind of playfulness. Steiny had recounted the story of his successful address at the meeting that night, and the two pals were going out to a cabaret café.

Later that night the remark stimulated Steiny's curiosity, even though he was inclined to feel that Jack was introducing cajolery. Steiny's glassy eyes looked out quizzically; the lumpy side of his jaws distended, and his flat chin moved up till his loose lips came together, marking a swath across his face from ear to ear. Back from the roots of his tongue came an oily laugh, and "How do you know, Mac?"

Along the silent side-streets, till they arrived

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at the colored-glass doors of their nocturnal caravansary, Jack related the episode, for the most part truthfully, as it happened; for Steiny would hear the story from Rebecca soon, and it was wise to be veracious now.

"I had no intention of going to the house," that was one of the few falsehoods of the relation. "I was on a car that went out that way. A few seats ahead of me sat a famous Harvard fellow named Harry Crawford. I saw him hand a couple of tickets for the Harvard-Yale game to some lady friends of his across the aisle. That's how I decided on the ruse about the game for Rebecca."

Steiny gave one of his guttural chuckles at this, though deep down in the thing that ought to be his heart he was amazed to learn that his father had not entered brusquely on the scene and shown Jack an unceremonious way to the door. He marveled also at Rebecca's conduct, though that was easy to account for under the circumstances that confronted her. "Rebecca is getting Americanized," he said, as if gargling the words.

Jack, when they obtained a table in the helter-skelter of the café, had yet to elucidate one point —how he would have obtained the precious tickets for the game. He was a Harvard man, he explained, with an option on the coveted tickets, if he wanted to purchase any. "None this time, Steiny, old boy; but we'll be able to take the dear girls to the brilliant class-day over there next

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June. We are coming along, Steiny, we are. You'll have a name to conjure with in a few more weeks. The money is there for us if we go on with a few more bold strokes. Not only across the country, but over the Atlantic to Europe we'll fling our message, Steiny, and our comrades in Germany and France will want us over to help the Socialist cause, Steiny. There's fortune for Ernest Kaufman and fame for Mr. McSweeny."

Steiny chuckled at the wheedling speech. "It busts up like a bubble if my old man comes across the road," and he laughed, as he shrugged his drooping shoulders, at his security from that possible detection.

Then the two young Socialists, in the growing dizziness over the drink and riot of the café, advanced to higher planes in Socialism—"the places our logic leads to, that's all, Steiny," said Jack magisterially.

"Why, look here," his swimming eyes glanced around at the assembly of lovers-of-the-world, chattering away amid the clinking glasses and in the heated air, stuffy and stale with the smoke of cigarettes. "There you are, Steiny; see it; a picture of a good reign of free love. We'll preach that soon."

This was only a preliminary remark upon a fertile subject. Jack would develop it—perhaps to-morrow—for his young orator.

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And the following evening he had his notes with him. He was tutoring Steiny; the new material would enliven the audiences next week; it would double their salaries and lead them on, over their carrion fields, to the broad highway of fame. Ernest Kaufman—the name was on all lips even now. See how the cafés greeted him; men pointed him out with their beady eyes and told their ladies to smile on him. With what wild acclaim should they greet him when he soared into higher realms of Socialistic doctrine.

V

During the ensuing days Steiny became proficient in the Socialist tenets about marriage. He studied a translation of Carlo Monticelli upon the subject. He would repeat it word for word—starting with the definition of free love. Steiny closed his eyes while Jack held the yellow book:

"By free love we mean the union of two individuals of opposite sex living together, not on the basis and power of the contract legalized by the judge or sanctified by the priest; not from a spirit of interest, for social convenience, or other motives foreign to love; but because of the free pact, because of the laws of mutual sympathy, because of the elective affinity of two beings who meet and unite, and, as Max Nordau says, that affinity alone has to govern the reproduction of the species."

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"Learn this paragraph, too," prompted Jack a few minutes later, as he produced a paper from his bulging pocket. "It has the idea in big words." And he read it, winking now and then at his pupil:

"Marriage is a private contract entered into by a man and a woman for the purpose of establishing and maintaining the co-operative family; and for improving and perpetuating the human species. It is founded on the scientific discoveries of Charles Darwin—natural selection and the survival of the fittest. It is determined by economic conditions. It is temporary in its nature, since it is dependent on the sentimental affinity of the contracting parties. Being purely personal in character, it does not come within the scope of State regulation, excepting in the matter of physical fitness and registration for the purpose of vital statistics. It may be entered into and dissolved at the pleasure of the parties concerned without the sanction of civil or ecclesiastical law, and no person can give a lawful reason why this man and this woman should not enter into such contract."

"No reason why you and that Ruhlman girl should not marry," he said. "And, Steiny," he whispered with a show of agitation, as he slipped forward other excerpts, "here is one from Engels. It begins, *'Marriage is moral only as long as love lasts.'* Hey, Steiny—only as long as love lasts.

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Bebel says that morality commands that the unnatural and, therefore, immoral bond should be severed. And read what Carpenter says about free woman and free love."

And the studious Steiny quickly committed to his ready memory all these brilliant passages from the Socialists. Jack was enthusiastic over the prospects, for his vulture eyes were peering ahead to no distant day when he would be able, with Steiny in his power, to cast a longer look at Rebecca. Jack knew how completely fettered was the unsuspecting Samuel Steinberg; a threatening look or wave of his finger, when the time came, and Steiny would quickly cringe and whimper into obedience. "What becomes of Steiny?" Jack, with a savage smile, was musing in his study of the outlook. "All I have to do is to threaten that I will reveal everything to his father. Ah, Steiny," he said with a low voice, long drawn and husky; "you will be cut off without a cent, and then we'd throw you out down here and leave you the husks and gutters."

But there was no reason for this flurry of suspicion and anger; no cloud was in the sky; Steiny was perfect docility; he even went ahead of the wild admonitions of his preceptor, proposing to take Jack out to his home during the Christmas holidays, though McSweeny had really suggested that invitation. "And put on your smartest clothes, Jack," he added; "perhaps you can run

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in out of a storm to Ruhlman's house and make a little speech about me to Marie. The coast will be clear; you know the old Uncle Ruhlman is never home when Marie is there." And he chuckled and blew out circles of smoke.

"I wonder that somebody has not eloped with her before this," Jack prodded Steiny; then with a sudden halt he pinched Steiny's arm, nodding to indicate an object across the street.

"Talk of the devil, why, there is old Ruhlman, sure as the devil," said Steiny, in an excited breath, and giving Jack a hint to move with him into a side-street. "He has eyes, that Ruhlman, Jack, and he might see Samuel Steinberg under this moustache of Ernest Kaufman, and then my old gent of a paymaster would put an end to my finances."

He tried to make light of his feelings, but Steiny easily—too easily to McSweeny—showed that he was afraid of the possible detection.

"Wait a moment—hold up there," whispered Jack. "So that's old Ruhlman." He fixed his gaze upon the man, while Steiny stood hiding behind a post. "And say, Steiny, that's the fellow I mentioned the other night; that's Harry Crawford. Pretty good, pretty good," he muttered, as if he had solved a problem and was willing to express his conclusion. "I see it, Steiny. Harry Crawford, whom we all thought away coaching at football, is getting thick with Marie's dear uncle.

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Pretty good!" he said, as if fully satisfied in his conjecture. "Didn't I tell you that I saw Crawford on a car the other night when I was going to pay my respects to Rebecca. I'll bet that Harry Crawford, the clever fox, was out flirting with tickets for the Harvard game to Marie. Now, what are we detectives to say? Shake, Steiny," he reached down secretly, so that they might not attract attention upon the street. "We are wise to Harry Crawford." His thick lip curled, and he tried to appear gleeful.

He was unaware, as is evident, that Harry Crawford had just been to the office of Mr. Ruhlman to present the note from the Marquise d'Anters. The two men had then walked across the Common in the clear, invigorating air of a November afternoon; and as they stood on the edge of the street they were arranging an evening when Harry would come out to Ruhlman's house.

Crawford's first visit to Mr. Ruhlman's beautiful home was on the very night when Steiny was making his vehement exposition of the Socialistic doctrine about free love. Three days had intervened. Jack had coached Steiny zealously for a new display of his oratorical splendor; McSweeny's heart and mind and all his passions were preparing a coup which he would strike as soon as Steiny had gone on record as an advocate of free love.

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The wild applause after Steiny's speech was still ringing through the hall in the alley near Dover Street when Jack plucked his proud pupil by the sleeve and drew him hastily into the anteroom. "Bravo! Bravo!" he was crying with full hypocrisy, slapping the perspiring orator on the shoulder. "That was the best yet; that was the topnotch of Socialism, Steiny."

Then, as the hour was late, he set immediately at the one object of his wild passions. He had his hand ready, and played the cards. "Say, Steiny, you're tired, and I do not want to keep you, as we must get these dirty flannels off and take a bath. So let's come to business now, Steiny—you know—about Rebecca."

With the plaudits of the crowd still ringing in his ears, Steiny was not attentive; dazed over the wild hour in the hall, he was not prepared to consider an irrelevant topic. Then seeing Jack's urgent stare, he shook off his inattentiveness, rubbed his hands over his wet forehead, and asked slowly, "What's the game, Jack?"

"Why, simply this," whispered the other. "I want to marry Rebecca—there it is, put rather flatly, I'll admit. But let's not debate; you're tired and need a change of clothes."

"You look serious, Jack," said Steiny, who yet felt that his pal was bantering.

"Serious as the devil," said Jack in a most emphatic tone. "Don't look surprised. What!

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You look surprised after all you've said to-night!"

Steiny had often flung out his witticisms about Rebecca and Marie Ruhlman; but he never imagined that his light remarks were going to lodge and grow in McSweeny's heart. He wiped his brow again, felt a dizziness seize upon him, and turned as if to shrink from his comrade. "What are you giving us, Jack?" he said after a moment, with a weak, sickly smile. "You are married. What are you giving us?" He tried to look brave and fling Jack's seriousness away as a bluff.

"Now, now, Steiny," Jack drew near with an ingratiating tone, "What's all the fine language you declaimed to-night. Marriage ends, if love goes—isn't that the point? Isn't that the thing which made the hit with the crowd to-night? You look fine, going back on your own words, don't you? Your speech to-night showed that I am not married," he went on rapidly, but not in an exasperating tone—rather with a smooth voice and looking as pleasantly as he could. "No, I'm not married. I was, but love is gone—and the record is gone. I made her tear up the marriage record. And what's in the city's books—well, we gave fake names there. And I am free to marry Rebecca, and you can help me, Seiny—you whom I have worked for so hard, Steiny."

But the shock of this horrible proposal still left Steiny speechless.

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"Come on, Steiny." Jack put his hand out and stroked Steiny's arm. "I'll do as much for you. I know Harry Crawford; I'll get ahead of him at Ruhlman's, and see that Marie will not be his."

For a moment a faint smile flitted across Steiny's drooping face. Then, as a last protest against his unnatural temptation, he said, "Rebecca ought to have a word to say."

"You can get her to say the word, Steiny," Jack promptly answered. "I'll do as much for you, Steiny." Jack's breath was hot, and his eyes were wild with passionate expectancy. "Come on, my good comrade," he went on, his arm locked in Steiny's. And he repeated over and over again his mad appeal. He showed Steiny again the horrible scandal that Socialism would feel if Steiny would not practise what he preached, if he would not live up to the speech which he had just delivered; and with smug phrases he assured him that after all Rebecca, like any other woman, would be free to leave Jack if she did not like the marriage; and again seeing a wild light in Steiny's eyes at the mention of Marie's name, he drew fascinating pictures of the Ruhlman maiden and plans that would make her Steiny's wife.

"Let's go out," Steiny proposed. "I must get off these oratorical clothes." He was yielding to the horrible proposal.

Jack showed wild delight, and grasped Steiny's

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hand. "Your word upon it now—solemnly, Steiny. I'll promise you Marie Ruhlman for wife—and you give me Rebecca. You will be home soon, hey, Steiny?" And he threw his arm around the young Jew's neck.

"All right, it's good," said Steiny. "Let's go to our rooms."

And the two young Socialists, wrapping their big coats about them, went out into the snowy night—regaling each other with repetitions of Steiny's fine periods in the speech that night, and with occasional words about the two fair maidens whom they hoped to wed after the formula of a Socialistic marriage.

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CHAPTER VII

THE PROPHECY

I

LIGHTS and shadows of a new world rose and fell with ever-increasing interest before Harry Crawford's eyes. The process of preparation for his great story was fascinating to him, and he enjoyed his mental peregrinations exceedingly more than the pleasant social hours which often had been his among the most select circles in town. Now, during entire mornings, and through continuous hours at night, he engaged his thoughts upon the work in hand, thumbing old books for an argument, sailing away over oceans of time as he turned the pages of great picture-books, and plying his pen as he set down some relevant thought or suggestion for possible service. Large sheets filled with historical dates and names kept multiplying before him; little descriptions of persons and places were stacked on the table beside a note-book filled with references.

Harry carefully hid from his friends the secret of his studious hours. In Europe his enterprise was known only to Lady McCornish and to the house d'Anters—though very probably by this time the loquacious Marquise had advertised the

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matter to a score of audiences. And in Boston Mr. I. Ruhlman was the sole participant in the young author's secret. "However," Harry wrote under a boyish smile in a little letter to Vicomte Maxwell, "though I have not met your friend Marie Ruhlman, I think she will soon know all about my work, and she will report that I am yet very far from the middle of the story."

Lest this manner of stating his position should be misleading, he added, "I have not written the first chapter, though I have so much ready to write about."

Then in another letter in response to the hearty inquiries from Madame, he wrote, "Marie Ruhlman will return from the convent in a few days. It is her uncle's plan to have her take me for a few visits to a Jewish family here, Marie being an intimate friend of the Jew's daughter. Then, as I understand, Marie is going after New Year's Day with a party of girls to Europe. Doubtless you will see her, and Maxwell will have his princess."

His "report of progress" being finished and signed, he added a postscript: "Lady McCornish bravely orders me to take her London house for a week or a month in the spring, as she is to travel on the Continent. Does she consider me a Robert Louis Stevenson or a Thackeray, worthy of this generous patronage?"

Madame, upon reading this, did not undertake

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to answer for Lady McCornish. She whisked a long letter back to Harry, commanding him to accept a suite of rooms at the Chateau d'Anters until he put "finis" upon his masterly novel. She was having the rooms set in order—her summons was final. "And if you have some chapters of the story written by the departure of Marie," her rolling, rapid writing looked up into Harry's merry smile, "give them to her, and we shall know them by heart before you come to the final chapters."

But Harry was in no hurry to set his young, inexperienced pen at work. His present occupation was pleasant enough. Then, too, he was perplexed at times over his misgivings, and once or twice he was tempted to abandon his ambitious designs. What did he know about the art of writing? he asked himself; and how should he ever piece a thousand patches together with consistent effect?

But his spirit of doubt was neither deep nor permanent. He pushed ahead with his exits and entrances at home, coming and going in some vague expectation of an observation that was to force him definitely to his desk. He spent days in the study of style—looking for precepts and examples from Newman and Stevenson. In long, quiet hours of the night he perused the historical romances upon his shelves from Walter Scott down to Robert Hugh Benson.

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"That is execrable," he said with emphatic disgust as he flung Kingsley's "Westward Ho!" across the table. "That is a spirit I must avoid—a glittering tale of glaring lies; a tirade against Spaniards and Jesuits, against everything that is not English. Ugh!" And he added with loud disdain, "Books like that, filled with untruthful impressions, have perverted history, have built up the great monster of Prejudice."

Again, as his own work would have to do with a phase of religion, Harry searched through some modern novels, hoping to discover the secret springs of their ephemeral successes. He had a supply of them, from Ward's "Robert Elsmere" down to Churchill's "The Inside of the Cup." Harry noted as he studied the dates of the publications that "one of these things appears every five years—a wild furore receives each one, then a hush, and lo! another book. It's a fertile topic, an easy process—this thing of scraping the thin paint from the churches, and showing that they are wood instead of stone. Look at that!" Harry slapped a page of Churchill's conceited reflections; "What a bumptious pen. This fellow talks with a final dogmatism, and people gulp it down. And yet they get riled if the Catholic Pope of Rome makes a definite statement with his Council."

"Here you have it," he said a later evening, as he was continuing his study of modern religious

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novels. He was holding in one hand Deland's "John Ward, Preacher," and in the other Allen's "Reign of Law." Pages of notes which he had made lay before him on the desk. "Here is the same old story. Iconoclasm—off with the make-believe, and the High-Churchisms, and the sanctimonious veneer. Then a little dash of love to knit the things together. There's the trick in these books. None of them are constructive." And Harry paused with the reflection that his novel would at least contain a constructive principle; how far it should go—there was the problem. Wait till he saw the Jew; be patient till Marie would take him for a study of the Steinberg household.

He put the books aside; too much time devoted to literary criticism, he thought with a smile at what he good-naturedly felt was ambitious conduct on his part. "But why don't they have done with the theme?" was his parting shot at the recurrent American novels on religious situations. "The ground that supplies their staple is simply this—people will have religion; despite Puritanism, they will yearn for ceremonies and a ritual in services. Then comes along the Protestant hammer—the free interpretation of the Bible—which knocks them in the head, and throws the Bible itself out to the ash-heap. The poor minister's wife runs out to save her book, but the minister, who has knelt down in adoration to the German

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critics, sets a match to the pile, and then, having no religion left, he runs out to a short-lived noise in the slums, having no bread to feed the people. A few years later, a new scene, more shallow study, more German criticism, another scraping of the thin whitewash, and we have a new novel. Delightful claptrap, and plenty of money for the spilled ink."

Here it was already late in November and Harry Crawford was far from the first line of his story. This procrastination should not continue. Begin; scribble away at something; there would be time for reconstructions; but for heaven's sake make a start. What would the Chateau d'Anters be tempted to say if Harry appeared empty-handed at his visit in the spring?

And again the mood would sway him to take plenty of time. He recalled a remark of one of his Harvard professors—"haste makes waste in American literature." And then there was that incident at Holy Cross—that evening the priest, while conversing with Harry about writing, read a letter from a young popular writer, illustrative of the mushroom readiness in modern magazines: "Father, please send me outlines for a story. I must have a thrilling tale of fifty thousand words for a serial by the end of next month."

"Don't be like that, Mr. Crawford," the priest said with pleasantness. "I had to chide this little author, though of course I know he is better-

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minded, and has to write in this rush to earn his daily bread."

Harry Crawford's daily bread was earned for him for a lifetime ahead; he could afford to take his time.

II

Harry Crawford readily enjoyed the evenings at Mr. Ruhlman's house. There was an engaging, solid fascination in every minute, richer than he had anticipated. Every circumstance—and how numerous and unusual they were—contributed to the interest and pleasure. Harry's high hopes, growing brighter every day, set a halo about the commonest things upon the street or in the house. The far hills which he could discern through the morning mists seemed shrouded in mystery and set as a background for a great drama; and the little pathways in his garden looked up during the clear, cool nights and invited him down for contemplation and a brisk, invigorating walk. The commotion of the winds drew his attention, now whistling an aria around his study-window, or a lonely melody in the chimney, now chasing the whirling leaves in and out of the crevices in the hedge, making them scamper away across the fields like merry children out of school. And without being vulgar or impolite, Harry Crawford found himself studying faces and bits of conversations everywhere—on the

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cars, hurrying along the street or sitting with a cigarette in a hotel lobby. "There is a feature," he would say, as some lineament appeared noteworthy—a person's penetrating eyes or lines of refinement and strength about the mouth, or a broad, impressive brow, or a delicate curve of a neck in harmony with a graceful chin.

But very likely—and he candidly smiled at his playful fancy—he would find all these graces in two girls at hand; surely he should meet in Rebecca Steinberg the model of his typical Jewess—the little maiden whom he planned to idealize in his story; and surely Marie Ruhlman would be fair enough for the most beautiful gentile in his great romance. Already, though he had not met them, he had, with healthy laughter in his heart, put them playfully down as his heroines. Anyway, he would wait and see for himself; it would be an easy procedure for his descriptions afterward. Imaginative processes, as he had remarked to Mr. Ruhlman, were beyond his skill; why be dull when realities were within reach to serve his purpose! "Even Samuel, the Jew's son, may be marshalled in to play the villain. Why, that's capital!" he said, jubilant in his half-serious proposal. And with buoyant feelings he set his notes aside, reserving for the pocket of his big coat a few pages and a book, and stepped briskly out into the keen November wind. Across the court he went, his eyes and ears alert, the motion

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of health and inspiration in his walk, on past the broad stretches of Beacon Street to Mr. Ruhlman's home.

III

"I know you will take no offence, Mr. Ruhlman," he went on to say, with courteous regard for his host's feelings, "if I touch upon things that will appear to pertain to religious controversy. I surely am anxious to avoid that. And let me state, though in no spirit of boastfulness, rather with a keen sense of loss, that I myself am at present without any religious convictions. In a general way, I suppose, I am a Christian; my friends would surely say that of me, and my enemies, if I have any, might allow it, too. Education in American schools, I take it that you know this, does not tend to give definite religious views to a man. I have known even a few Catholics to go the way of the rest of us—lose their faith at our colleges."

Mr. Ruhlman found himself, much to his surprise, gazing fixedly at Harry Crawford; the candor and the straightforwardness of the confession pleased him and attracted his full attention. He reached forward to push back a log in the great fireplace, though in truth his action was a ruse to cover up the pause till he should speak.

"I too, I may honestly tell you," he spoke in a slow, measured manner, with tones that verged

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on the solemn, "though I do not remember to have touched upon this topic with man, woman, or child during the past fifteen years, I, too, have no religious tenets, neither sentimental nor intellectual, if such be the way to state a position. That I had sincere convictions in earlier days is another matter. What they were you will not ask me. But I stand now upon ground near you —at least somewhere near you." He had no further confession to make; whether his antecedent beliefs were Christian or Jewish he did not state. "Yet I hope we both are fearless and brave enough to champion truth and right."

This last utterance was commonplace enough, yet it was inspiriting to Harry Crawford's present mood. The exhilaration showed in his clear, open eyes, and it prompted him to approach his ground with greater ease. Reserve and caution over religious views were altogether unnecessary. The little dialogue that followed prepared the way for Harry to enter upon the consideration of his topic.

"I have here what will bring us along for this evening." He went to his coat in the hallway and fetched a small brown volume. "This is a volume of the great Jewish history by Josephus," he said, handing it to Mr. Ruhlman.

"Yes, I believe I know the contents quite well," replied the latter, returning the volume.

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"Now," Harry began, "a few passages here and there in these chapters set me thinking, and together with other reflections, I wish to draw my conclusions into a story. I shall hardly be ambitious enough to call it a historical romance."

"Romance it may be, however," Mr. Ruhlman broke quietly in, with a light laugh; "a real romance, if Madame d'Anters is good at prognostications."

He gently slid the large table-lamp toward Harry.

"The most prosaic things turn to romance in the presence of her electrifying personality," responded Harry. "She'll be disgusted, I am afraid, when she learns of my dull craftsmanship, thinking, the dear Madame, that I shall turn out a spicy society novel."

"Not so, Mr. Crawford, not quite so," the other protested graciously. "Pardon, if I differ here. I must say that I found a deep seriousness underlying all the elaborate show of nobility out there at Claireville. Pardon me if, with what appears to be egotism, I say I have been in and out of pompous places in many parts of Europe, and I have perhaps trained an eye that sees under the surface. Now, the d'Anters, I feel convinced, stand on rock. They can afford to laugh heartily at the frivolous sheen upon the circling waves at the base of the rock. They do not talk religion, but I could perceive that, deeper than their rollicking

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airs of nobility, and richer than their immense sources of revenue, they have solid assurance in their beliefs and morals, and there, there is the source of their light-hearted play, thence arises their inspiration to laugh and enjoy life to their hearts' content." He reached his hand over to Harry's arm and with a kind tone said, "Pardon me for the digression—go ahead with your Josephus."

"Well, it is simply this," Harry began, as his eye scanned the pages for the marks he had made. "I need not read these passages now that you are so conversant with them. I can proceed directly to my argument."

"It will be a pleasure to hear them read again," Ruhlman said with an inviting tone.

"Just here," Harry had the book open. "The historian makes it quite clear that both the Roman general and the Jewish chiefs endeavored to save, in the awful destruction of Jerusalem, at least the sacred part of the temple, the Holy of Holies, as the account reads. See," Harry had his finger at the fourth chapter of the sixth book, and he read, "'At this time one of the soldiers, without staying for any orders, and without any horror at so great a crime, being possessed by a certain weird fury, snatched a brand out of the wood that was on fire, and being lifted up by another soldier, set fire to a golden window, through which there was a passage to the room

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around the sanctuary on the north side. As the flames went upward, the Jews made a great clamor worthy of so great an affliction.' These are the words, I note," said Harry, looking up for a moment, "and these that follow. 'And they ran up to prevent it. And now they were reckless of their lives, and spared not their strength at all, since that was perishing which they had long been fighting to protect.'"

"Then Josephus tells how the Roman general, Titus, gave orders to put out the fire, does he not?" asked Mr. Ruhlman, to show that he was familiar with the history.

"Just so," answered Harry, lifting the page.

"Read it," said the other, nodding.

"A few sentences," Harry was running his eyes through the paragraph, "a few sentences to prove that Titus did not want the magnificent sanctuary destroyed. 'And now a certain person came running to Titus, and told him of the fire, as he was resting himself in his tent after the recent fight; and he leaped up in great haste as he was, and ran to the temple to put a stop to the fire; and all the commanders followed him, and the legion accompanied them in great agitation. . . . Then Titus, both by calling in a loud voice to his soldiers that were fighting, and by giving a signal to them with his right hand, ordered them to quench the fire. . . . And when they were near the sanctuary they pretended not

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to have heard Titus' orders. . . . And now as Titus was not able to restrain the fury of the enthusiastic soldiers, and the fire prevailed more and more, he went into the Holy of Holies with his generals, and saw it and what was in it, which he found to be far superior to the report of foreigners. . . . Titus supposing that the sanctuary might yet be saved, rushed up and endeavored in person to persuade the soldiers to quench the fire. . . . But their passion overcame the regard they had for Titus, . . . as also did their hatred of the Jews, and a certain vehement inclination to fight them. . . . And thus was it burnt down against Titus' wish.'"

Harry was closing the book slowly.

Ruhlman, leaning back in his chair, and flicking the ashes from a cigar, remarked, "The chapter does not end there."

"These few lines sufficiently illustrate my point," Harry replied, opening the book, and lightly pressing back its pages. "The historian, as we can conclude from other sources of knowledge as well, makes it evident that neither the Jewish nor Roman authorities wished the total destruction of the temple; nay, rather they labored frantically to preserve at least the wonderful sanctuary."

"Admitted," laconically replied Mr. Ruhlman, his hand resting over the ash-tray and his eyes peering into the far corner of the room. Then

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after his deliberation, he sat upright, looked at Harry with a question, slowly given, "And Josephus says, does he not, that this act of final destructiveness was due to fate? Read that, if you please," and he leaned back to listen.

Harry found the sentence toward the close of the chapter, and replied, "Yes, that's his explanation, his statement, and that is the transition to my next point, as I shall show, I hope." He lifted the book toward the light and read. "'Now, although one could not indeed but greatly lament the destruction of such a splendid pile as this was, since it was the most wonderful of all the works that we have seen or heard of, not only for its curious structure and size, but also for the vast cost of every part of it, and for the glorious reputation of its Holy of Holies, yet might such a one greatly console himself with the thought that it was fate that decreed it so to be, which neither living creatures nor works and places can avoid.' That is a pagan explanation," said Harry with emphasis, "and I feel convinced that Josephus knew better. See what he stops to marvel at—the exactness of the period. A stubborn evasion. Why does he not acknowledge the exact fulfilment of a certain great prophecy?" Then Harry proceeded to read. "'However, one can not but wonder at the exactness of the period. For the same month and day were now observed, as I said

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before, as that whereon the temple was burnt before by the Babylonians.'"

"Doubtless, the coincidence seemed marvelous to the Jews, most striking," Mr. Ruhlman proffered this explanation. "That is why Josephus records it."

"Yet another coincidence is quite as remarkable," answered Harry with a tone for debate. He drew some papers from his pocket and searched for a historical note. "Eight months before this destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, a Roman hand fired the Capitol in Rome, and the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus with the sanctuary of Juno and Minerva fell in the flames." Then he read from the paper, "'Thus passed away in less than a year the two greatest places in the world, the religious center of Judaism and Paganism.' There is a coincidence that Josephus does not note," Harry observed as he replaced the paper into his pocket.

"And the prophecy you mention as connected with your argument—what of that?" asked Mr. Ruhlman.

"Josephus obviously ignores that, though he must have known it; yea, and it must have been on the lips of the people—they must have cried it out aloud during the siege, and especially when the sacred walls of the temple were crumbling in the flames."

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"A prophecy?" quietly asked Mr. Ruhlman in a dubitative tone.

"The prophecy, so clearly uttered, so well known to Jews at the time, as it was spoken hardly more than a generation before—'Not a stone shall be left standing upon a stone,' the prophecy of the destruction of the great shining splendor of Jerusalem."

"Spoken by the Christ." Mr. Ruhlman was bowing his head to signify that he recognized the allusion. "But the Jews may not have taken that seriously; they had rejected the Christ, you know."

"Granting that," said Harry, "though I find that they showed a stubborn belief in some other prophecies made by Christ—for instance, that He would rise from death after three days—did they not run to the Roman governor to get a guard? But granting that they heeded not the other prophecies, what should the Jews think of the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem?" Harry was again selecting the paper with his notes.

"Why a Jew rather than a gentile?" Mr. Ruhlman put an affable tone to his question.

Harry, scrutinizing his papers, did not reply directly; on finding the note, he looked up, saying, as he held up his hand, "Here are the words. They are from the nineteenth chapter of Luke's

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Gospel:" He was reading a marginal note. "Christ is addressing His words to the city of Jerusalem. 'For the day shall come upon thee: and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side, and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee; and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone; because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation.' It is remarkable that Josephus failed to record that awful prophecy in connection with the terrible destruction of the city. Surely the people did recall it, surely they did."

Harry's tone was as serious as if he were in a pulpit. "And there comes my story," he pushed the paper aside, indicating that he had ended the historical readings, and was ready to proceed to the plot of the story.

"But before we pass out from this and come to your romance, is this where we call in the Steinberg family?" Ruhlman asked with a light laugh. "Let me say that there are two questions to be asked—two observations or two bits of elucidation, or what shall we call them? First, is this so-called prophecy historical? Was it actually made? When, and where?—and such questions. And secondly, even if it is historically true, what great importance is to be attached to it? It is, certainly, a remarkable coincidence, and I admit Josephus might have complimented

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it by mentioning it. But is it not merely a guess, a guess that came true?" He lifted his hand to add another word, for he noticed that Harry was anxious to reply. "I do not ask these questions for myself. I have my own views on these points. But these are what the men on the street will demand of you," and his face lit with good humor, as he leaned back in his chair, "or perhaps the ladies at the Chateau d'Anters may ask you, if Madame allows you to be bothered by them."

"I shall not take the time to say the little that I am prepared to offer in reply," said Harry. He glanced at his watch, as he rose, and went toward the window. "It is growing late, and see how the snow has fallen! Surely we were rather attentive to a very sober discourse thus to have let the snow steal a march on me. And the wind has been blowing merrily; look at the drifts!"

"Happily they are on the outside," answered the host, as he shaded the light from the windows and peered out. "And as you have no anxiety to get home, I hope you will take a room here. Let's ring for a little refreshment, and when we get on with the history," he motioned to Harry to be seated, "we must go down to a glass of something that the Marquis recommended when I saw him last summer."

It was all spoken so quickly that Harry had hardly anything to do but acquiesce. The servant

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appeared and was told to see that the fire in the dining-room was "at full tilt."

"And now about the historical value of the statement—of the prophecy which you read," he sat back to listen.

Harry, after sorting his packet of papers, selected one. "Everybody—or at least scholars—admit nowadays that the Gospels are historical documents, genuine and authentic. I have my list of authorities here," he held out a sheet, covered with two long lists, "given me by a painstaking friend in Worcester last winter. See, there they go back, step by step, century beyond century—see—up—and here is Irenæus, who was the disciple of Polycarp and he was a faithful disciple of John." He set the paper aside and went on with his steady discourse. "Of course, the German critics muddled up the controversy a great deal——"

Mr. Ruhlman, with a light laugh, broke in: "As the saying is—German critics dive deeper and come up muddier than the devil."

"Well, they knocked a heap of rubbish into their books, and English scholars thought them very profound, adored everything from Germany, and spread the atheism broadcast in the name of science and higher criticism. And, of course, American divines went smattering into the muddy waters, every plowboy of a country minister became infected in time, and the churches

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were left empty—no sheep, no shepherd. And look at the half-baked sciolists in our American religious novels," his tone had rising indignation.

Mr. Ruhlman was surprised at the earnest seriousness, and the talk so unusual to meet with in a young American, a healthy, unpretentious-looking lad, who, though he was at home in a library, should find likelier pleasures hunting in the winter woods or scoring upon an athletic field. "Crawford must have been reading and thinking these many months," thought Ruhlman.

"But don't let me digress on the track of these novels," said Harry with a happy shake of his head.

"And let the German critics wipe off their mud," replied Mr. Ruhlman.

"Why, what other documents are so genuine as these historical records, which the world calls the Gospels? Cæsar's Commentaries, the Orations of Cicero, the score of writers of that time—who casts any doubt upon the authenticity or the genuineness of their works? A line here and there in the texts may be questioned, but that is all. And yet none of these writers, not one of them, has such a catalogue of worthy witnesses to vouch for them as have the Gospels. Moreover, all these documents, Christian and profane, have come to us for the most part down through the same channels of zealous care and scrupulous fidelity."

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"Well, granting that your Gospel record and the quotations you made are genuine and authentic," said Mr. Ruhlman, as he pointed toward a section of his library in the room; "granting that, I say, let me trouble you a moment with a query about the prophetic nature of the utterance. Shall I maintain that it was merely a remarkable guess, one that very remarkably came true?"

Harry could not determine from Mr. Ruhlman's manner whether he was proposing a difficulty with serious intent or merely inviting further discussion. He was abashed for a few moments after Mr. Ruhlman's gesture toward the books; perhaps his host after all was better read, more thoroughly informed, and with keener thoughts upon all this ground than Harry could think of becoming in a month of Sundays. What bearing had those books on their present discussion? Harry had professed himself a Christian of vague, indefinite persuasion; Mr. Ruhlman's account of his own religious convictions had even a lower estimate. What, then, was implied in the allusion to those books?

"I may be allowed to put it this way," Mr. Ruhlman began, noticing the pause. "After all, it is easy enough to make a prophecy, even such as the one in question. For example, there are meetings and congresses in the interests of Peace —prizes and speeches, endless and ubiquitous—

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everywhere, here and in Europe, a constant twanging upon that string, Peace. And they have built a great temple to the cause—the magnificent Peace Palace at the Hague. Now, in the very face of this world-wide hubbub over disarmament and the brotherly federation of all the nations, I am ready to prophesy that in a very few years the whole movement, prizes and congresses and palace and all, will burst like a bubble in the air—click, clack," he snapped his fingers; "and the fair thing will dissipate into the clouds. And then, after the fine talk of the ambassadors from the nations—war, war in all its horror; not merely a trench round about a city, such as described in the words you read, but trenches across the entire breast of Europe, and over the mountains east and west; and routes of war under the seas and up in the farthest altitudes of the air. There is my prophecy." He smiled to show Harry that he was not hammering home a contention that must be believed. "There is my prophecy," he repeated; "elaborate shows on behalf of world-wide peace are the present vogue, yet in a very few years war will deluge the world."

Harry caught the laughing gleam in the man's eyes and it helped him to respond in kind.

"But that is not properly a prophecy," he began with his simple modesty. "A prophecy is a prediction based upon a certain knowledge of future events, which can not be, or at least were

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not foreseen from natural causes." This sentence was recited as if he had learned a definition. "Now, you may predict a dire and widespread war, even in the face of the international pretence for peace, because your eye sees under the sham and the glitter and the insincerity of the peace proposals. You see that the nations of Europe are snarling at one another's heels, ready to grapple throats—England singing her 'Rule, Britannia,' and Germany strengthening the scope of her great military system, and France driving her sons and daughters away into exile because they will adhere to their conscientious beliefs; and then the rumbling noises from the camps of Socialists and Freethinkers, and so on, and so on"; he waved his hand above his head. "Every nation is sowing the seeds of war, is keeping armies and navies ready by night and day—oh, isn't it very easy to predict war, Mr. Ruhlman, even under the shadow of the Peace Palace?"

"And is it not so with this prophecy of the Christ with regard to Jerusalem?" asked the other, as he rose. Taking Harry's arm, he motioned toward the dining-room. "But please go on with your argument," he said, as he touched an electric button and a spacious room showed rich and warm in the glow of the lights.

"A word will complete it," Harry replied, as he went toward the chair. "We know that both the Jews and the Romans wanted to have the temple

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saved. It was the sacred sanctuary to the Jews; it was a marvelous structure of art and wealth and splendor, which the Romans would have preserved for their glorious spoils of war. Every human endeavor, therefore, and the habitual attitude of men's minds made for the preservation of the temple, at least for a portion of it. That, you see, is manifest in the testimony of Josephus and of other historians. Who, then, would dare to say, and in a solemn and impressive manner, as Christ did—note that the historian says He cried, as He made the great prediction—who, I ask, would dare to prophesy that not a stone upon a stone would be left standing, that the marvelous city upon the hills—the walls, the towers, and the temple would be beaten flat to the ground, though all the powers of the world should wish to save it?"

Mr. Ruhlman did not wish to interrupt the talk, though they were seated, and the table held out its pleasant invitation. He leaned lightly on the table, his hands folded over a plate, listening attentively till his young visitor should have the argument concluded.

"And?" his interrogation signified that Harry should continue.

"And Christ made that prophecy—and it was fulfilled to the very letter."

"And?" again the inviting interrogative.

Harry was forced to smile at the pleasant

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urgency in his host's manner. "My contention is that Christ, therefore, was more than man. No man with mere human power could have made that prophecy. Christ did; He must have been possessed of divine power—a divine messenger or ambassador—whatever be the term. He was more than man."

"The Messiah, you mean to have proved?" asked Mr. Ruhlman in the pause.

"Well," Harry moved his chair closer to the table, and his face lit up, hinting that he wished to conclude his explanation quickly and not detain his affable host later into the night, "that's what I want to have some Jews consider in my story. I suppose a family to be living near Jerusalem at the time Titus razed the city to the ground. This family escaped the horrible famine and the cruel slaughter. The old man and his father before him have held out against Christianity, though the parents, let me suppose, were conversant with many of the wonderful works of Christ. Now, upon the destruction of their fair city—the cherished sanctuary of the Holy of Holies flat upon the ground—in comes the fair daughter of the household, the beautiful and beloved daughter; she recalls the prophecy, which she had heard her father tell of mockingly in her childhood. The fulfilment of the prophecy strikes into her thoughts with cogent force. She becomes convinced that the Christ was more than

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human—in a word, that He was the Great Prophet—the Messiah."

"And she becomes a Christian," said Mr. Ruhlman; then with a little outward wave of his hands he added, "But the story will not have its end there."

"I see you have it." Harry's response showed that he was pleased. "The story really begins there. What will be done with this little Jewess, if she insists, if she obeys the conviction of her mind and joins the Christians?"

"You want old Steinberg to answer that." Mr. Ruhlman used a playful tone. "Capital! You may be able to get his view on the point—a real, authentic answer. Perhaps I could tell you what would follow, if your Jewess becomes a Christian—yes, even if the entire family, as well as herself, would be struck at the fulfilment of the prophecy."

"That is why I wish to find a strict, orthodox Jew, and have him assist in the solution," said Harry, smiling. "I am not an expert at invention."

"Easy to obtain." Mr. Ruhlman reached for a bottle of *"Blaue-au-Meaux,"* the wine recommended by the Marquis d'Anters. Filling Harry's glass, he said slowly, "You can start with inquiries and talks about ancient Jerusalem when we go to visit old Steinberg. Later when Marie returns she will take you there; while she and

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Rebecca are enjoying their youthful chatter, you can proceed with your story. I for one will be interested to know the old man's response to your conclusion." He lifted his glass toward Harry, with *"à votre santé,"* and a smile with the French phrase.

"A la vôtre," replied Harry.

"And your conclusions will push farther and lead your story a long, long road."

Harry looked up quizzically, as if he did not understand the meaning.

"Simply this: Your conclusion that Christ must have had divine powers—that he was a prophet, an ambassador with a divine mission—will force new roads to open up and probably bring you on to investigate them."

To Harry's mind the statement was still general and ambiguous, but before he could request a further elucidation of it a terrible banging at the front door shook the house, and both men jumped to their feet and rushed toward the hallway.

IV

The lights in the hall and the study at the front of the house were on. Mr. Ruhlman, hearing a shuffling of feet outside, a sound as if somebody was leaning against the door or rubbing his hands over the heavy oak panels, stepped noiselessly aside and shut off the lights, motion-

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ing to Harry to look out by the windows in the other room.

"For God's sake!" cried a thick, unsteady voice, as the man fell against the door and rattled the knob, "for God's sake let me in." Again the man was groping at the door; indistinctly, as if his teeth were shut, he called in a husky cry, "Rebecca!"

"Heavens!" whispered Mr. Ruhlman, as he flashed on the lights. "Can it be the Jew's son? Is it Samuel?" He started for the door.

"I shall open it," offered Harry, as he stepped forward briskly. "The wind is blowing the snow fiercely."

He undid the lock, began to open the door cautiously, and he was pushed back by the weight of the man's body as it fell, apparently lifeless, in over the threshold. The man's hat was down over his eyes and snow was packed hard in the crevices of the clothes. Harry lifted the form into the hall, knocked the snow from the clothes, rubbed it away from the neck and ears, and began to chafe the cold, red hands, while Mr. Ruhlman closed the door against the little hurricane.

"In here," said he, indicating the study, where there was a leather-covered sofa.

Harry lifted up the man, as if he were a child, and carried him to the sofa.

"Drunk," he whispered to Mr. Ruhlman, as he

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stood up and looked closely at the unshaved, sottish face.

"Then I need not get a hot drink for him?" he asked, pointing toward the dining-room.

"Hardly," said Harry; "no, not at all. He's had a-plenty. Lucky he wasn't caught in a drift and put to sleep in a blanket of snow."

"The lights probably attracted him." Ruhlman set his ears to listen. "But there goes a car—hear it. Strange he did not try to get on a car."

"That's all right, Sam," said Jack McSweeny, with a wave of his hand. His eyes were closed, and he appeared to be sleeping healthily.

Harry looked at Mr. Ruhlman. "He means Steinberg's son, evidently. He mentioned Rebecca, you recall."

"Do you wish to find out who he is?" asked Harry, moving toward the couch. "This warm room will send him into a deep sleep and we'll have to stay up till morning with him."

"Yes, get him to speak," Mr. Ruhlman assented, and stepped back.

"Here, here," Harry used a sharp voice and rubbed the fellow's head and shook his shoulders. "Get up for a minute. Do you want to go home?"

Some of the snow which Harry had failed to remove slid melting from Jack's hair and down under his collar. The cold trickle had the effect

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of a shock on Jack, and, with a shudder, he sat up and looked staringly around.

"Get up!" said Harry, gently helping him to his feet, and then turning him around so that the electric lamps would not dazzle his eyes.

"Oh, you here," asked the visitor, with a slight hiccough. He seemed to recognize an acquaintance, and put out his hand, which Harry took good-naturedly.

"How are you, Harry, old boy?" McSweeny stammered. And then with a stumbling laugh he waved his hand and shouted, "To hell with Yale, hey, Harry, old boy."

Harry turned toward Mr. Ruhlman, and with a smile said in a low voice, "Somebody who knows I was at Harvard. I used to play on the football team."

Jack, seeing Harry turn to speak, shifted around and caught sight of Mr. Ruhlman. "Pardon, sir," he muttered, with an awkward, sweeping bow. "Pardon me." And then, through his leering eyes, he looked at Mr. Ruhlman, and started to come toward him.

Harry put a firm hand on Jack's shoulder. "Do you want to go home now?" he asked.

But Jack did not heed the question. He still looked at Mr. Ruhlman, and said with an air of familiarity, "Marie is your beautiful niece." He tried to wink, and the weak face fell into a mockery of a smile.

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"Shall I see you down to the car?" Harry showed incipient vexation.

"But Rebecca is the beauty, hey, Harry?" He lifted his fingers to his lips, but Harry knocked them down with a smart blow.

The effect of Harry's reprehension was that Jack McSweeny took hold of himself and shut his mouth. He looked around, as if he had suddenly come to his senses, and had already betrayed himself badly. "Curse the luck," he must have said within himself, though no revelation of his thoughts went to the other men. "I beg pardon," he said, and wheeled about to find the door.

"Too rough for you outside," said Mr. Ruhlman kindly enough. He went to the hallway and pushed a bell-button for a servant.

In a few moments the butler entered. "James, take this man over to that room next to yours."

And while Harry was leading the drooping figure of Jack McSweeny to the hallway, Mr. Ruhlman said in a low voice to the butler: "Get him dry clothes, give him a glass of brandy, lock the door on him, and in the morning get him away from here without his seeing us; take him out by the hedge, and don't allow him to know that he was in here to-night."

Then Mr. Ruhlman led Harry back to the dining-room to finish their talk. "The Jew had better keep close eyes on his daughter," he said, smiling, as they sat down.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE JEW'S ANSWER

I

DECEMBER came in and set before Harry Crawford's eyes a picture that harmonized with his mood of hopeful anticipations. Out from the windows, in the clear, growing light of the morning, he looked over the long stretches of the park, all still and silent under the deep snow; the coated fir-trees bent like slanting shelves; the straight, horizontal rays of the joyous sun tinting with the most delicate shades of pink the soft layers of snow upon the boughs, and making the intertwined tapers upon the shrubberies appear like rose-colored fingers lifted in prayer; and the smooth surface of the dark-watered lake gradually lost its heavy, scowling look and showed as a brightening eye awaiting long-desired tidings of good omen. Harry gazed upon this scene of restful silence—no motion of traffickers in among the driveways, no stir of the air to disrobe the trees of their ermine vesture, or even ruffle the lace-like vines and trellis-work of the arbors; even the busy snowbirds were absent from this vista of hushed repose, preferring to search for their scanty food among the sheltered crannies near the houses or out in the trodden tracks of the streets. Only the cheerful

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rays of the sun contributed an element of action to the voiceless, silent landscape. The pink tints grew to brilliant red; then, as the feathery snow felt the gentle warmth, it glistened as if with a sudden thrill, the crimson dyes disappeared, and a million crystals, brilliant as diamonds, gleamed and sparkled across the fields to Harry's window.

Upon this sudden transformation of dreamy waiting to a thrill of invigoration, Harry quickly turned from his own contemplation and set himself at his desk with his papers and books. It was surely time to begin, he thought. He lifted his pen from the little metal support, and drew forward a file of notes, commencing again for the fiftieth time to arrange them according to the half-formed plan of his story. He drew to his side a revolving case of pictures, and with the pen against his lip, he began to gaze at a picture of the environs of Jerusalem.

The door-bell rang, and the morning mail immediately afforded Harry a pretext to interrupt his proposed work. Down went the pen, and the picture-case was gently pushed aside.

With the morning paper there was only one letter to read; but Harry caught sight of a French stamp upon the envelope, and a smile accompanied his brisk action in opening the letter from the Marquise d'Anters.

There were salutations from each member of the household to their young American friend;

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two long pages about the remodeled rooms at the Chateau; a humorous sketch of a little journey the family made to a play by the students at the University of Angers, "the Duke de Rienrien leading the orchestra, always four beats behind the players"; and then, "But, oh, the wonderful hours at the cathedral of Chartres—those gorgeous windows, I really did not want to go to dinner after I had seen them. And then at the railroad station, I was still in a dream, looking back at the towers of the cathedral—they are not alike, you know, centuries apart in their construction; and though Maxwell kept tugging on my sleeve, I almost lost the train; and all the way home, when we were not laughing at the awkward antics of the poor Duke de Rienrien and his bewildered players, I kept the magic spell of the cathedral windows in my eyes."

The pages of light-hearted talk read on to Harry's pleased eyes. He was half-reluctant to see the letter drawing to its close. The presence of this bit of redolent atmosphere from the Chateau was too charming to have the windows shut quickly upon it. He saw the last paragraph coming, and he set down the papers till he lit a cigarette. Again the merry talk from the rapid flowing lines, and again Harry's healthy heart aglow with childlike delight.

"And finally, do not imagine that I have forgotten your book. You will pardon me if I have

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been advertising it too far ahead of time. We have met a hundred people who will be your readers. And last week I met a charming French girl at the convent; she writes in one of the Paris journals and she will translate your story for French readers. I went myself to the publisher, *Beaupère et Cie,* near the Gare St. Lazare, and he is very willing to publish the translation. I feel sure that I shall secure a German translator soon, and there is a German press in Paris. You will surely learn that Lady McCornish has spoken to an English publisher about the book. So, my dear Harry, if you wish to start the little French translator upon her work, send some chapters over to us."

Harry was almost breathless when he came to the end of this overwhelming report of the Madame's activity. He jumped up and with nervous commotion started to pace the room. His notes and books and pictures seemed to recede from him with a taunting frown. Not a line written yet, he said with some agitation, and the Madame already demands copy for a French publisher. Let her busy herself at home—go see the Chartres Cathedral again, and laugh at the Duke de Rienrien, and—but Harry crushed the incipient irritation, and allowed himself to think kindly about the dear, generous-hearted Marquise. What courage she

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had, what splendid enthusiasm in his interest, to visit a French publisher and prevail on him to take a stranger's amateurish prattle.

"But I'll have to tell her—what she, good, sensible woman, knows—that Rome was not built in a day," Harry mused, as he returned to the desk, his feelings quiet and unperturbed again.

Two lengthy postscripts were waiting to be read from a sheet which he had not hitherto noticed. "The convent I mentioned is in Claireville. Shall I appear to boast if I say that when the French government so tyrannically expelled the various religious orders a few years ago, I succeeded through some influential friends in Paris in having the nuns retained here. They have never been disturbed, though in former years I think when the question of the persecution arose, a few of them departed for other schools, and one of them, Sœur Julie, went to a convent in Nova Scotia, and was a teacher and devoted friend to Marie Ruhlman. Isn't that a happy coincidence? This Sœur Julie has written to the convent about Marie's proposed sojourn in Europe, and the good nuns are anxious to share with us the pleasure of Marie's visit. However, gathering clouds threaten a storm over the poor little convent again. You know that the French government is in the hands of Jews and Freemasons, and they are exasperated because

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the Claireville convent escaped their looting sacrilege. I am alert to their cowardly machinations; they will find me equal to their iniquitous laws if they dare to carry out their whispered threats."

"Bully for you," Harry almost shouted as he sat, marveling at this recitation, revealing, as it did, a new phase of the Madame's character. He turned to the next postscript, after he had waved the paper vigorously over his head, saying aloud, "You're a brick, Madame; you're a tip-top American."

"Speaking of Jews," the note read, "there have been a few anti-Jewish scenes in town recently; very tame in comparison with the demonstrations that we used to witness here in the late nineties, when the students from the Latin Quarter used to parade the streets crying, 'Down with the Jews,' and storming Zola's house and threatening to sink him in the sewer. That was at the time of the Dreyfus affair. But now, though they have no immediate object or cause for their loud raillery, the students have to find some amusement for a five-o'clock recreation; in consequence, over around the Luxembourg and even in at the Place de la Concorde, you may see them in little parades, singing and shouting against what they call German Jews. Some of our visitors attribute these disturbances to English sources."

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II

After the distraction caused by Madame's letter, Harry pulled his chair toward the desk and looked distractedly at the various objects before him—the books and notes and the pictures. He was in no mood to fix his thoughts steadily upon any of the countless suggestions that flitted through his mind. His imagination flew away to the Chateau d'Anters and then back to the Ruhlman home. Now would ring out a phrase from the Madame's letter; then like a flash he would dwell upon some point in his recent talk with Mr. Ruhlman. Harry, with something like impatience and annoyance at his inability to concentrate his mind, moved his chair closer to the desk, and pulled the picture case toward him. But he could not exorcise the annoying ghosts; the haunting play of fancy would not be obedient to his indefinite command, howsoever wishful and determined he was to begin at least a paragraph of his book. There he was now standing upon the Claireville road that leads up to the convent. Gendarmes were coming up to drive the nuns out upon the streets, and Madame stood at a gateway with a threat to wring their ears if they, like miserable poltroons, should dare to step across the threshold. Half a minute after that picturesque phantasm was gone Harry had Nova Scotia in his distractions, and he was wondering if this Sœur Julie—well, what was it

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the Madame said about Sœur Julie in connection with Marie Ruhlman?

Here, here, this rambling and wool-gathering would never do, thought Harry with very decided emphasis in the shake of his head. He flung the pen into the corner of the room, hoping the exercise of going after it would drive out the disturbing spirit. He must go out; then after a brisk, stimulating walk in high rubber boots across the parks he would surely return and have something to show in writing before the night. Half of Europe believed that a young American author was writing the last chapters of a masterpiece. Harry laughed heartily at the humorous fancy, which had its origin in that prodigious letter from Madame la Marquise d'Anters. And all that the brilliant author was engaged upon was the pulling on of his boots. There, they were on; and Harry, wrapped in his heavy coat, started out to tramp the snow-covered parkways.

Even there he went into other day-dreams, as he met a succession of vivid memories from recent incidents. How came that drunken fellow to stumble into Ruhlman's house the other night? The lights must have attracted him. But how did the drunken fellow happen to know the daughter of old Steinberg? How did he happen to know Rebecca Steinberg? And he mentioned Marie; he spoke of her beauty—that drunken fellow did.

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And how will the Jew look upon the argument about the prophecy? "I do not wish to offend any class of people," Harry almost spoke aloud, as he plowed on through the snow. "If I bring it about that my girl in the story becomes a Christian, and then if bitter persecution follows her—well, perhaps that is what old Steinberg himself will say should follow her. There is the way out of it. The Jews can't take offence if I attempt to depict their awful cruelty toward a convert to Christianity, when even old Steinberg comes to admit that the girl will be subjected to merciless hardships and to torture, perhaps. How can they be displeased over my conclusions on that part of the story when one of their present-day zealots will confess it?"

For a whole hour, occupied with incoherent reflections and surmises, Harry tramped along across the snowy walks and fields, stopping occasionally to fill his lungs with the delicious tonic of the clear, sunlit air, or to gaze at some pretty effect formed by the evergreens under their soft coat of snow. His fingers tingled with the warm blood and his cheeks showed a deep, healthy red under the clear, cold skin. His eyes sparkled with the joyous feelings that thrilled through him, as with strong, buoyant strides he flung the feathery streaks of snow on before him.

Yes, he would try to write dispassionately; he would make his issues conform to the adequate

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testimony of facts. He had already a large list of corroborative evidence. Take the first one that occurred to him spontaneously—without consulting his notes. Had he not learned from one of his readings that if a Jew becomes a Christian, the household look upon it as a death in the family? Long prayers of mourning are recited, the lamentations resound, gloom and grief have their sway, and then the hearts of his people are closed against the lost son of Israel; nevermore is the name of the Christian convert to be spoken by his kin. To them he is dead and buried.

And with a score of similar reflections upon the material for his story, Harry Crawford arrived at his rooms. In every fiber of his body ran the healthy effect of his physical exercise, his blood aglow with the magic draughts of the pure, invigorating air; his cheeks wearing the ruddy blush of a youth after a game, and his hands warm and almost leaping to lay hold on some valiant enterprise.

After his bath Harry received a message over the telephone to accompany Mr. Ruhlman that very night to the home of the Steinbergs; and he immediately brought a pile of books about Jewish subjects to a seat by the window. One by one he went through the pages, stopping only for a light lunch. Through the long afternoon he continued his studies, perusing selected essays

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about the Talmud; reading the striking extracts which he had marked from the Targums, the Mishna, and Maimonides; committing to memory bits of erudition about the ceremonies, the customs, and the traditions; and summarizing a tract concerning modern Zionists—this latter, as Mr. Ruhlman suggested, to render old Steinberg congenial and perhaps talkative.

In a sense it was all oppressive reading. But Harry's earnest purpose to prepare himself for the discussions at the Jew's house supported him through the tiresome and gloomy researches. Gloomy, indeed, they were, despite the venerable antiquity of the prescribed rites and the solemn seriousness that pervaded the multitude of minute laws. For what but depression of spirit, what but sad-visaged melancholy could result from these long histories of baffled hopes. Were not these pretentious expectations, these clamorous repetitions of the prophecies really a sham? Why do the Jews so bitterly deny that the great prophecies have already been fulfilled? And while all Western civilization founded its joy and its best assurance upon the fact that the Messiah had come, how could Jewish traditions be other than gloomy in denying that historical and world-wide fact, stubbornly, with eyes shut, crying aloud for an Advent?

Politeness prevented him from adopting an aggressive attitude of argumentation when he

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went that evening to Mr. Steinberg's house. His own native refinement was sufficient to prompt a courteous regard for the old man's idiosyncrasies; and a hint from Mr. Ruhlman suggested a sagacious policy for the conferences.

"It will be well to deal at first only with the general aspects of Jewish history," he began. "The old man will be reticent or at least guarded in his talk till he scents your purpose. Consequently, your conversation will reveal to him that you have read widely and sympathetically the history of his people—their achievements and their aspirations. He will perceive that you are informed and inquisitive about the prospects of the Zionists. That will be a note to win him. And then, after a few days, you may easily lead up to your own subject, and propose your argument. Rebecca will surely be admitted to the talk, when the father is persuaded that a young, scholarly American shows understanding sympathy in their cause."

Harry shook his head with pleasant protest at the insinuation about his being scholarly. Then a look of hesitation and doubt appeared upon his face, quickly discerned by Mr. Ruhlman, and as quickly explained away.

"There is no deceit in this, Harry," said he with sincerity. "I for one, and I know you for another, do not wish to advocate a process of hoodwinking. I have merely suggested a fair

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and honorable method for you to obtain some correct views at first hand. Your courtesy will be logical; if any false answers will be made they will not be yours. And you deserve, on account of your work, to have entrée to the very heart of a synagogue. Our curious American globe-trotters, when they behave respectably, are admitted to the Vatican and even to an audience with the Pope."

III

It was early in the evening when Harry and Mr. Ruhlman arrived at Steinberg's magnificent residence. The moon, a great round silver disc, seemed a perfect ornament to hang above the long silver stretches of the snowy lawns and fields, making even the little ripples upon the reservoir at the foot of the estate run toward the land in brilliant silver ribbons. "It is the new month," said Mr. Ruhlman, while they were waiting at the door, "but not a new moon."

Harry caught the allusion, and he recalled, though he could not repeat them, that there were Jewish prayers and laws concerning the new moons.

"A gentile will probably open the door for us," Mr. Ruhlman remarked. "In a house such as this, a servant is generally kept who will be able to attend to the necessary household duties on the Sabbath."

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"So I have read," replied Harry, as he looked off across the long pathway of silver sheen which the moon made upon the snow.

"And generally a Catholic servant, too," added Mr. Ruhlman.

"A Catholic?" queried Harry, as if this offered a chance for doubt.

"Wisely so," said the other; "for the Jew is ready enough to recognize that a Catholic servant or employé can not practice pilfering. When a Catholic goes to confession, you know, he is bound to make restitution if he has stolen anything. Consequently the Jew knows that his silverware and trinkets must come back to their places."

"Steinberg is probably at his devotions," Harry remarked, noting the length of time they were at the door.

"Or arranging a gentile room for our conference," added Mr. Ruhlman. "See," he pointed to the top of a doorpost.

Harry looked and saw what appeared to be a cylindrical tube of lead nailed to the post.

"Mezazza," explained Mr. Ruhlman. "Doubtless we shall be taken into his study-room, where there are no Jewish symbols."

He rang again; "And with regard to Steinberg's servants, one is a Catholic girl; so have I learned from Marie."

The door was opened slowly by old Steinberg

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himself. He greeted Mr. Ruhlman warmly, and, much to Harry's surprise, in ready and correct English, though his pronunciation and tones were deeply guttural.

"This is the historical student?" he asked, when Harry was introduced.

"Almost a beginner," Harry replied, with a little gesture to silence Mr. Ruhlman's eulogy.

They entered a long, high room, the four walls of which were lined with books, shelf upon shelf to the ceiling. A heavy oak table stood in the center of the library upon a curiously woven rug. Five deep chairs were about the table, and a window-seat, resembling a couch, occupied the deep recess between the bookcases.

"You will smoke?" said Mr. Steinberg, as the servant entered with a tray.

Mr. Ruhlman took a cigar; and Harry, who was on the point of taking a package of cigarettes from his pocket, decided to conform to Mr. Ruhlman's example. The girl went out to fetch Mr. Steinberg's pipe; and while he was filling and lighting it, Harry, without obtrusive staring, managed to observe the old man's face. It was of the kind he had expected to see—a long, sober countenance with heavy, lowering lines in fleshy wrinkles down from the sides of his nose to the extremities of his moustache; his ears half-hidden under the bushy hair, and his mouth wide and receding behind the beard.

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Several minutes were given to uninteresting remarks about the weather—the recent snowfall, the prospect of a sturdy winter especially during the holidays, the work that storms give for the unemployed; and back came the rambling remarks to one upon the splendid view they all could see just then from the library window.

After a while the conversation drifted to books, and in time to the great, absorbing topic of history.

"It makes us look forward, always forward," said Steinberg in his deep guttural tones. "History is always preparing the to-morrow."

Harry did not utter a rejoinder that was in his mind. He wanted to say, "But some chapters of the world's history are completely ended—shut up and sealed; they have no to-morrow." That would have sounded like a stern comment upon Judaism; he kept it to himself.

"A cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night," said the old man adopting a paraphrase, "history leads us on."

The sentence drew them naturally enough to some remarks upon the tribal peregrinations of the Jews in the far-off centuries of the world—on from Moses, past Pharaoh and the Egyptians, along by Mount Hor; the recital told how Gedeon overthrew the Madianites; it glanced at the Assyrian captivity, marveled at the gorgeous splendor of the Babylonian courts, recalled the

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faithful leaders of "the people," and praised the ceaseless fidelity of "the nation" to its sacred traditions, how, even after all the wars, the Jews in Jerusalem wrote to the Jews in Egypt, exhorting them to keep the feasts and every letter of the rites, as they were observed in Judea.

Harry showed an intelligent interest in "the chosen people"; his knowledge of old empires and historical movements, amateurish as he considered it, seemed to delight Mr. Steinberg, and prompt him to address most of his remarks to the young visitor. Mr. Ruhlman, too, from his own wide readings in the subjects that fell into the talk, was well suited for the conversation; and it was clear, to Harry at least, that Ruhlman's reticences, as he sat back with his cigar, were intended to win for his protegé a sure place in the favor of the Jew.

"Mr. Crawford will be able to come again," he said when Steinberg rose to bring down from the shelves a book of pictures. "It is growing late; perhaps Mr. Steinberg will allow him to see the books some other time," he nodded toward a section of the library, as if he knew what was contained there.

"Readily, readily," replied Steinberg, moving toward the table with a massive book. He opened it carefully, and Harry caught a glimpse of a page done splendidly in colors, the border shining in gold. "There is one view of the Tem-

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ple," said the old man, his tone suggesting triumph.

"Splendid," ejaculated Harry.

"And other volumes like it," said Ruhlman with a sympathetic voice.

"I have never let them out of the house," Steinberg spoke hesitatingly, "but——"

"Mr. Crawford would gladly come here for his studies," interposed Ruhlman.

"For his studies—delighted to have him," said Steinberg with a glad voice, the heavy, sad lines of his face brightening up to his close, deep-set eyes. "I am here most of the time, and I will let him have this room whenever it pleases him to come."

Steinberg was evidently delighted at the prospect. He went almost excitedly along the room, tapping the books, or rubbing his hands with long, slim gestures.

"But wait," he said emphatically, as some new thought flashed upon him. "I will have Rebecca know this young diligent student of our history. I wish Samuel were here. He is studying in New York. But you will see him in the holidays. Rebecca must know you, Mr. Crawford."

He touched a little bell at the window, and the servant came. "Hannah, tell Rebecca to come down."

"Could she have been waiting at the head of the stairs and listening all the while?" was

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Harry's thought, as he heard, quick upon the father's words, the daughter come toward the room.

She entered and stood modestly near the threshold, her eyes for a few moments looking down upon the rug, and then lifting them toward her father. She recognized Mr. Ruhlman and, bowing with a sweet smile, advanced to take his hand, asking for Marie.

Harry, after the long conference, was in no mood to be engaged with curious observations over feminine charms; moreover, he was aware that in strict orthodox Jewish circles women are generally kept in the background. Yet he could not but note the exquisite contour of Rebecca's face, the rich black eyes, and the skin not heavy and sallow, but fair and with a gentle blush upon the cheeks. A sort of mantilla fell across one shoulder and was wound playfully around her arm.

"And this is Mr. Crawford," said the father in a very sober voice, when Ruhlman, to the great delight of the girl, announced that Marie would soon be home.

"Marie has told me about Mr. Crawford," said Rebecca after her curtsy. "Marie is so anxious to read your new book."

Harry was almost exasperated to hear that his adventure was advertised up and down the Atlantic seaboard. But what could he do about

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it? Was he to throw prevarication back into the face of Marie? He merely shrugged his shoulders and smiled, perhaps with a little confusion, before the dancing light of Rebecca's questioning eyes.

"It's on a historical subject, isn't it?" she asked.

"That's what we have enjoyed all the night," interposed her father with an air of dignity, before Harry could answer. "And we hope to have it again."

Plans were being arranged without any effort on Harry's part, though in accord with his desires; and Mr. Ruhlman was jubilant, even if he nodded significantly but once toward his young friend. He drew the old man aside, to mention a few particulars about his domestic and business affairs. This afforded Rebecca an opportunity to converse with Harry. She candidly showed her elation at the visit, and her ability to enjoy it. She easily discovered that Harry had impressed her father to an uncommon degree of favor. She had never witnessed such a reception—her father, so reserved, so brief in talk, now chatting away with real affability.

"How delighted Marie will be to meet you"; Rebecca beat about for a topic, while her father was engaged with Mr. Ruhlman.

"I am the one to claim the pleasure," said Harry. "Marie is to go to Europe, is she not?

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And she will lose her heart to Maxwell, Vicomte d'Anters." His great open eyes shone with merriment at this pleasantry.

"I have heard of the little lad," Rebecca said with growing intimacy in her tone. Had not her father's attitude prompted the confidence? "And I seem to know all of Marie's friends. I feel that I love her devoted Sœur Julie of the convent in Nova Scotia. Do you know Sœur Julie, too?"

And so came and went their little dialogue, till the father, turning from his talk, said, "Mr. Crawford will come any hour he is free. Rebecca, you will know where the books are to be found, if I should be away. And I hope, Rebecca, that you will be able to show yourself conversant with these historical researches and be ready to lend a knowing hand."

Harry assured Mr. Steinberg that his kindness was gratefully appreciated; and with other commonplace sentences he took his departure, going to Mr. Ruhlman's house for another sip of the favorite wine of the Marquis d'Anters.

IV

Twice during the following week Harry went to the Steinberg library. The visits were in the afternoon, and he went alone.

He was ushered directly to the library, and even if his eyes had been bent upon prying out

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any singular decorations or exotic ornaments in the house, he could hardly have succeeded in detecting them. The space from the door through an ordinary hallway to the library was short; and the doors were all closed along the passage. Once, as a door stood ajar, he caught sight of a hanging lamp; and when he went home that evening, he set down a note "a hanging lamp." And then he searched for some information about Jewish lamps, with the intention of constructing a descriptive paragraph for his story: "On Friday eve, when the Jewish sabbath commences, the master of the household goes to synagogue; the wife then lights the lamp, and walks three times round it with uplifted hands, and blesses God for His command." And he wrote out the command from the Targum, and afterward a note about the lamps "of seven distinct pieces," commemorative of the seven days of the week. "The first piece is hung up in the best apartment, after which the six other pieces are joined together by a small hook, and hung up in the middle of the room. The fifth piece from the top is so formed that it contains the oil, and that piece has seven spouts, and in each spout a cotton wick."

So ran a hundred and one other notes that Harry put together during his week of study and observation. His two visits to Steinberg's home contributed nothing of special significance

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to his "plot," though they advanced him in the esteem of the old man. Rebecca was present at the second session; and when her father departed for an hour in town, she called Hannah to serve tea in the library. "And will you, dear," she said graciously to the servant, "be putting the books back—they are marked, you see—while we are taking your good tea? Mr. Crawford must be tired with these heavy books and their same old story."

Harry protested the point of fatigue, thinking as he did so, that he detected a tired feeling on Rebecca's part underlying her remark about Israel's same old story.

He lit a cigarette and forgot his imputed fatigue in the bright, vivacious talk of Rebecca, as she sat opposite to him, her cheeks aglow, her great luminous eyes flashing in simple joy, and her beautiful lips and teeth, when she smiled, looking as if from a master's picture.

"Hannah loves Marie, too, don't you, Hannah?" Rebecca turned her beaming eyes to the servant, who was carefully wiping the books and placing them on the shelves.

"Sure, she is one of us," replied the girl with a light tone of humor.

Harry understood that the remark alluded to Marie's religion; yet it was taken in good part, as he could detect from Rebecca's pleasant acceptance of it.

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"What if she should turn Zionist when she reads all these books, and Mr. Crawford's story?" continued Rebecca in apparent banter.

"And die, is it?" queried the girl in her rich Irish tone. "Sure she'd die for lack of joy, she would, having no heart in a dead past."

Rebecca read surprise on Harry's face. Was it due to the familiar manner of the servant, even though that was playful? Or was there a deep analysis contained in the last sentence? Or did Harry receive a suggestion to bring a character like Hannah into his story about a far-off Jewish household?

"That's how Hannah plagues me," she said with a light laugh, which Hannah readily interpreted. "See if you can make her behave, Mr. Crawford," she added, withdrawing from the table. "I want to show you Samuel's picture. Pardon me a moment. Father thinks that Samuel will be zealous in these studies, but I think he is occupied more with American things."

"Miss Steinberg is not a hard mistress, I am sure," ventured Harry with affable manner, when Rebecca withdrew.

Hannah at first was for keeping her thoughts to herself; but turning slowly from the bookcase, having deposited the last book, she said with her marked modesty, "Sure she is kinder than a sis-

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ter. It's little she'll be letting me do for her. And she plagues the life out of me, as she do be wanting to read whatever little book I bring into the house. She hardly sees my beads, my little rosary, but she do be asking about it, saying that Marie has the beads too. Sure if her father——"

But the sentence had to end as Rebecca returned with two photographs. "This is Samuel—last summer. Perhaps he will see you during the holidays."

"I hope to meet him," candidly replied Harry, thinking that with a young man opposite him he would have no scruple in driving home his argument about the prophecy and the destruction of Jerusalem.

"And this is a very dear friend of Samuel's"; she held up the other photograph. "His name is Jack McSweeny; he helps Samuel very much in his studies."

Harry almost gave a sudden exclamation when he saw the picture.

"Do you know him?" she asked innocently. "He is a Harvard man, Samuel says, and he is always praising him."

"I think I have seen him," Harry replied. He saw a face which was not in the loose-lipped and sensual condition it had when Jack McSweeny lay drunk one snowy night in Mr. Ruhlman's house.

"He is coming out here during the holidays

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with Samuel. So, you see, I shall have Christian company at Christmas."

Harry lit another cigarette to give himself a chance to conceal his bewilderment. Who was this fellow who went about drunk at night and stumbled into strange houses, and mentioned girls' names as if he know them? If this Jack McSweeny would only condescend to favor the Steinberg home during one of his drunken rambles, Rebecca would not call him Christian company at Christmas.

And the tea-tray being removed, Harry started to depart. In the hallway, he took courage to answer Rebecca's solicitous inquiry about the motif of his book. "It is really nothing," was his answer, "nothing but a story to show that Christ was a divine messenger, a prophet or an ambassador with a commission from God—a great prophecy, historically true, and the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem enter into the argument."

And then, with a few carefully phrased sentences, lest he should seem to insistent before an undisputatious maiden, he added some fuller explanations of his apologetics; and heartily promising to fulfil Rebecca's score of invitations to return soon, he walked back to his rooms, carrying along the road and through the parkway and the golden sunset, a hundred pleasant little memories of the afternoon. He could surely begin to write

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now. One more visit to Steinberg's, perhaps with Marie, and he would fix himself at the desk, the pen in his hand, and his heart assured of success.

V

Marie Ruhlman returned from the Washington convent on the fifteenth of December, almost a week ahead of the regular vacation time. This early return was due to the necessity of preparing her affairs for the approaching year in Europe. The party of girls with whom she was to sail would leave Boston on the second day of January. Obviously the intervening time was brief for a girl to collect the countless trinkets and innumerable articles of apparel. Marie did not have to devote her thoughts to the planning of the itinerary. That and its detailed ramifications were carefully attended to by her solicitous uncle.

Marie found very little time to meditate upon some problems that had confronted her in the autumn. Once or twice she was tempted to delay over that little question of her parentage, that other point about her conditional baptism, and the silent way that years had passed and her uncle had never spoken about her mother or father. And now, would it not be perplexing to mention these things to him, especially since she should be obliged to write out her inquiries in a letter—

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"always a letter, never a chance to talk with Uncle Ruhlman," she added.

But the excitement over the preparations for the voyage, and the sprightly attitude of the world during these Christmas anticipations, admitted no mood for what might have been distressing reflections. Her light, sunny heart swept her on with the charm of expectation and the golden glow of surprise. The commonest booths in the great, crowded stores seemed to invite her attention and to be relevant to her jubilant frame of mind. Over there beyond the horizon of the Atlantic was the vision of great cities, holding their wealth of art and traditions. There, after she passed Paris, was the Chateau d'Anters and people who were already her friends—a fact which so many letters proclaimed. Finally she would go to visit the little convent where Sœur Julie had lived.

Marie, in this merry anticipation of her voyage, did not feel chagrined that her uncle was not to be at home during her stay. She accepted as a very perfect explanation the letter which he left for her. "I am sorry, dear Marie, that I shall not be here for your holiday. I will be conducting a sale in Ohio, and one of the purchasers can not arrange to see me till after Christmas. But you will find all my plans in another envelope. You will have no inconvenience

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in carrying them out. And I hope to see you before the boat leaves."

The letter had a paragraph about Harry Crawford. "I have requested Harry Crawford to call, so that you may go with him to Steinberg's. Rebecca seems quite charmed with his story. You will find nothing novel in it, I mean from its conclusions with regard to religion; for it leaves off where you long ago began. But you will be interested in Harry's candid statement of the case, and the way the Steinbergs are to accept it."

Interested she was from that very moment; even in her multifarious proceedings in getting her outfit ready, she promised herself plenty of time for the young writer and his great book.

Harry came the very day after her arrival. He, too, had received a note from Mr. Ruhlman inviting him to call at his house. "Miss Sanders, perhaps, will have Marie out upon a shopping expedition; but please wait till they return."

He was not obliged to wait. Marie was at home, and Miss Sanders, who came to take charge of the house during the uncle's absence, was there.

"I was just going to call on Rebecca," Marie said, after greeting "uncle's dear friend." Her hat was on and her left hand gloved. "You must come," she insisted, her beautiful eyes looking

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wide at him, and the corners of her lips lifting into a pretty smile as they said, "Please do; Rebecca will be anxious to see you, and to hear more about the book."

But the book was almost forgotten during the hour. Mr. Steinberg joined the young people in the library, and he very promptly, but not boorishly, put a damper on the merry laughter and talk. He would go directly to talk about Jerusalem, and even to take up those chapters in Josephus describing the awful famine, and the frantic efforts of the Jews and Romans to save the Holy of Holies.

Harry labored courteously to follow. His regret was that the two girls had not been able to exchange their ten thousand topics of talk. He could have contended himself with a cigarette at the window-seat, and stayed there in silence while a Jewess and a Christian—a Catholic at that—were running on in their most friendly chatter. He would like to have noticed that Marie, who was not so tall as Rebecca, seemed in her readier conversation to be much taller than her companion. Rebecca's laughter was deep, but slower to come than Marie's, and not so musical. There were lines of exquisite beauty on either face, but Marie's appeared the more delicate and blended in perfect symmetry; see how her firm, graceful chin went to meet the more graceful curve of the neck.

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But old Steinberg would call Harry's eyes back to a book on the table. Yes, "Romans and Jews had fought almost beyond human strength to save the Holy of Holies."

Harry was almost tempted to close and cast his argument with all the force he could, straight into the eyes of the old man. The girls were listening attentively, as Harry discoursed upon the historical value of other books. Israel had had prophets, he said; Mr. Steinberg the other night had cited Daniel. Then—but he cut short his line of argument. He would be pleased to have these passages from Josephus brought up at his next visit. He was afraid, he offered by way of apology, that he had kept Miss Ruhlman waiting beyond her busy time.

"But I shall be able to come the day after tomorrow," she said brightly, as they went out of the door.

"I will be here," said Steinberg to Harry. "Bring Marie, so that she and Rebecca may learn a lesson in history."

Rebecca beat her hands in light applause, not in her father's sight, however, and she waved to Marie down the pathway. Was her father turning Christian? Rebecca almost delayed upon the question that flashed into her thoughts. She seemed beside herself with some new joy, as she threw her arm about Hannah's neck; and as the servant glanced drolly at her, said, "Marie

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and Mr. Crawford look so charming together."

But the father proved very emphatically that he was not leaning toward Christianity when Rebecca's "charming couple" visited the house again.

The two men sat down over the books, while the girls sat in the deep window-seat, appearing to be enjoying the scene from the window and their light-hearted gossip, though they, whenever the profound debaters at the table were urgent in the discussion, fell into attentive listening.

Harry, before a half hour passed, held in his hand a few narrow slips of paper, full of writing. "My chief anxiety in the little work that I am doing concerns one little point," he said. "I hold that the books of our New Testament are historical, that they are genuine and authentic. See, I have this list of authorities for my proof. How may we accept the older Scriptures, how the Talmud, or even the speeches of Cicero or the histories by Cæsar, if we reject these copious and reliable authorities for the New Testament?"

Harry paused to see if his preamble was admitted. He noticed, too, that the girls were silent and apparently waiting for him to proceed.

"Now I find recorded in these books a prophecy by the Christ; and Josephus among other historians, who might be cited, describes the fulfilment of that prophecy. You admit that the

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power of prophecy in the old days of Israel marked a man as of God."

A frown crept over Steinberg's face. Harry quickly perceived it.

"I do not wish to make you believe the same about Christ. I merely wish to have the argument go home in a persuasive way to a fictitious character in my story. A Jewish girl in the story, for example, is convinced that Christ must have been a great prophet, a messenger from God with divine power. Seeing the prophecy fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem, she becomes—as I suppose in my story—a Christian."

The old man nodded his head. The frown was not entirely gone from about his brow; but as his back was turned toward the girls they only noticed the acquiescing bowing of the head. After all, as Steinberg may have been thinking, was not this argument concerned merely with a fictitious character in a very harmless book? How could it intrude upon the lofty aspirations of Judaism? Not at all. Mr. Steinberg must be liberal where there was no harm to be feared.

"Now," Harry went on in his most courteous manner, "perhaps I may ask, what would be the attitude of the Jewish father toward this intellectual conviction of his daughter? I mean, what would he be likely to say when she assures him that the fulfilment of the prophecy convinces her that Christ was of God?" Harry did not wait

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for an answer, though he noticed Steinberg prepare to speak. He hastened to add, "I would not wish to offend any present-day members of the Jewish faith by giving the wrong answer."

Steinberg rose slowly from the table. Ah, he had to go cautiously with his reply. How in the world had the conversation arrived at this pass? Well, he must show himself liberal-minded, especially in the presence of this young American, this tireless boy of researches. "Why," he began very solemnly, bringing his lips up close under the great beard, "the father would have nothing to say. If the daughter was convinced in her full heart and mind that—that her conclusions were right—then the father would gladly tell her to follow them."

A sudden exclamation from Rebeeca, almost like a glad cry, startled the room, and brought the others to their feet.

"Oh, father, father!" cried Rebecca with glad delight, as she rushed forward and locked her arm in her father's, putting her cheek lovingly against his shoulder.

The old man interpreted her action as being a show of accord with his liberal utterance. She looked up into his eyes, showing her own shining with glad tears.

Rebecca was in no state of mind to restrain herself. The utter surprise she received in her father's last words to Harry Crawford fell like

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a bolt from the clear sky. Though in the presence of visitors, still the admission just made by her father prompted her to throw off all anxiety and speak out. Again she laid her cheek against her father's shoulder, and with a caress of her hand upon his head, she said, "And you, father, after this noble word to Mr. Crawford, will gladly let me be a Christian like Marie."

She could not go on. The old man recoiled, as if stung by a serpent. The poor girl had blundered. It was a crude and simple way for the child to state her case. Oh, but had not her father spoken so nobly just a moment ago, saying aloud that a Jewish father would be glad to see his daughter follow her convictions.

Wrath shone white in his face, out of his glancing eyes and quivering lips and in the bulging wrinkles on his cheeks. "You a Christian," he cried in a horrible, sepulchral tone, as he stepped toward his daughter. "There is my answer," and his wide-open hand struck Rebecca a fierce blow on the cheek, sending her reeling across the room into Marie's arms.

"Shame on you!" protested Harry with stern indignation. He took a position in front of the angry Jew.

"Shame on you!" Steinberg called back with hoarse effort. "You come here with your hypocrisy to pervert my daughter."

"I came here with an honorable purpose,"

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Harry promptly replied. "I am sorry I came, for the pain you have given this dear girl."

"Out of my house!" the old man cried, his fury seeming to be more intense.

Marie with her arms about Rebecca moved toward the door. Neither she nor Rebecca shed a tear, though Rebecca was quivering like a leaf.

"What shall my uncle say when he hears of this?" Marie spoke with beautiful fearlessness, looking at the raging father. That was a question to bring the Jew back to his senses.

"Go to your room," he said, in a calm tone to Rebecca. He swept across the hallway, and entered an unlighted room, banging the door after him.

"Sure, what is it, alanna?" Harry could hear Hannah's voice on the stairs.

Rebecca began to weep, as Marie bade her good-bye. "There, there," said Marie caressingly, as she kissed the wet cheeks, "it will pass. There, it is all over now."

"And if it isn't," said Hannah bravely, as she received Rebecca from Marie's arms. "I'll give him a piece of my mind," and then in a whisper to Marie, "the old Turk!"

Marie and Harry went out, and the Steinberg door was closed forever against them.

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CHAPTER IX

CHRISTMAS PASSES

I

THE following day was one of bitter grief for Marie Ruhlman. Turn where she would, engaged with her trunk or with her letters, she could not drive away the disconsolate feeling, remembering vividly the incident of the previous afternoon. There was Rebecca still trembling in her arms, a great red mark across her cheek from her father's cruel blow; her own arm was fast about Rebecca's neck, and her cheek against the rich black hair. The poor dear child! "Sweetheart," said Marie, out of her own sweet heart. "There, there, Rebecca," she was recalling her own whispered consolation, "there, it is over now; he will be sorry, and beg your pardon." And she was searching through a mist of tears the tense look upon Rebecca's face—the tightly-drawn lips that would not utter a moan, the hot brow of shame and pain, and the downcast eyes so modest, yet so brave.

Marie lived through the scene a dozen times, and yet found herself unable to hit upon an alleviating suggestion. The crash had come so instantaneously, there was no working back to discover the causes. Everything had been in sunlight,

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just a moment before—books and Harry Crawford's argumentation, and two insignificant girls in rapt attention by the window. Out of the clear air as sudden as the surprise of lightning from a cloudless sky, the bolt fell and hit a merry, innocent child. God have mercy! What if a terrible storm had been raging ever since upon the poor child's body and soul! God have mercy! Marie could do nothing for her devoted friend.

She thought to run over to the Steinberg house, and fling herself on her knees before the enraged old man, and beg to be allowed to take Rebecca out for a drive—out to the stores, out for a spin in the cool, calm air. But she quickly flung away the sudden thought. The plan was useless, it might add fuel to the angry passion and bring down added tortures upon Rebecca.

And what was this new religious conviction of Rebecca's, Marie was asking herself in complete perplexity. How had she come by the desire to be a Christian, and what did Rebecca mean by the word? Had she penetrated and mastered Harry Crawford's argument in a more persuasive manner than Harry possessed it himself? Or was it to other sources that the start of this spiritual development must be traced? Yes, now Marie recalled that in many little conversations during the vacation hours Rebecca had often questioned Marie about the pictures and the medals and other religious em-

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blems; and she had found her little Jewess friend absorbed in some of the books from Marie's table. Ah, then, the poor child had been reading and thinking. And Marie remembered a remark—a striking one now when she fitted it into the present crisis—one that Rebecca made after she turned a page of a new book which Marie had brought home from school: "Our religion is a closed book, Marie, it seems; all of its formalities are but hollow echoes of things that once were vital and vivifying. Your faith is living; its past and its future and its present are all alive and so harmoniously set together, the root and the blossom and the fruit—all a living faith."

Marie recalled the very afternoon when Rebecca uttered that, Marie thinking that it was just a passage out of a book; Marie replying nothing at the time so that she might not distress her little friend.

To what a pass it had all come, and so unsuspected, so unguessed at! And old Steinberg himself had precipitated the profession of his daughter's convictions; and with a brutal blow he had put a lie upon his own lips.

Marie felt more pained for the blow upon Rebecca's cheek, for the torture of the intervening hours, and for her own helplessness. Fortunately, as she glanced from her window in the early dusk of that December day, she caught sight of Steinberg as he emerged from the house,

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wrapped in a huge cloak, and going down the pathway toward a cab on the street. His head was bowed and he was walking with agile determination.

Marie ran for her hat, and was on the point of calling Miss Sanders, when a new proposal entered her mind. It would be useless to attempt to enter the house, futile was any hope to see Rebecca. What window would show her, in that great house of so many inner chambers, some of them lighted only from the roof. She put her hat aside, and sped to the telephone.

"Is this Hannah?" she asked with feverish expectation. "This is Marie."

"Yes, darlin'; and it's useless to expect Rebecca, the poor child."

"Quick then, Hannah, tell me all you can, and what help I may give. Quick, while that cruel father is away," said Marie in breathless haste, bringing the receiver close against her ear.

"Cruel is no name for him, and I told him so. I told him this very hour, and he going out the door, that I'd have the police here if he carried on again."

"Oh, but he hasn't scolded or—" Marie twitched at the hint conveyed in Hannah's words.

"Scolded?" broke in the voice from the other house. "Sure that would be a pleasant pastime, though I haven't heard him scold since the boy Sam was home last summer. But worse than

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scolding, is it. I think he used a whip late last night. I didn't hear him, though I stayed up the whole night. But I saw the blue marks across her arms, and her eyes were sick with the red. I couldn't hear him, or else I must have dozed off into a bit of sleep. The rooms are at the top of the house—a suite of comfortable rooms, but sure they are prison enough."

"No, no, no!" cried Marie, beginning to tremble; "he didn't hurt my loving Rebecca again!"

"Yes, and his tongue is worse than a whip! The terrible curses! And didn't I think he was out of his mind when I heard him shout this morning, like a voice smothering in a tomb, 'Rebecca, Rebecca, you'll drive me mad!' And she then trying to soothe him. I could hear her; and when she came to put her arms about him, he cursed again and slapped her away. I nearly broke down the door, and when I got in, I gave him one word of a threat; but poor Rebecca made a sign for me to leave, so as not to anger him more."

"Oh, if Uncle were only here, I would discover some way to help Rebecca," Marie said with a trembling sigh.

"Rebecca will not be hurt much till he comes," said the voice, bright in its assuring tone.

"And how can you tell, Hannah? What if you should be dismissed?" Marie's voice fell heavy with fear.

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"Then it's himself that knows I won't be dismissed. And how do I know? " Hannah hastened to answer her own question. "He is mortally afraid that I'll go publish his doings to the town, and at the very doors of the synagogue and at every crossroad. And I threatened to do that. I told him that I had already spoken to my brother this very morning, but that we would keep it secret, and the town would not come running out to storm the house, if an old torment of a father behaved like a decent Christian. To hear him, as he threatened to put Rebecca in a crazy-house, swearing that he could get a doctor to say that she was dangerous and out of her mind."

"Oh, terrible!" cried Marie, stamping her foot and beginning to weep.

"And Rebecca, the poor child, kept her peace, like a martyr. And then he told her he would send her out half-naked in the cold of a winter night, and she could make a living on the streets."

"O God, have pity!" was Marie's plaintive plea. "Watch, dear Hannah, and bring Rebecca over to me."

"She'll be all right, alanna," came the tender-hearted promise. "Sure I stepped in just when he was torturing his child with the threat of the streets, and I shook my finger at him, and told him that I was going right out to call the police. He did not know that I had been listening. The

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white rage shook over his face, but I didn't mind his fright, and I told him so to his wagging beard. And I told more, as I said to you, and you can be content that Rebecca will not hear another word from his angry lips."

"But you'll watch, Hannah," whispered Marie, wiping her eyes.

"I'll let you know, alanna, every little minute I can. But don't worry, child dear, don't feel uneasy. Rebecca requested me to say that she will be all right now. Only she does not want to kill her father, as it would do to him, if she were to steal out of the house and run away from his reach forever. She says—how she has been reading the books—that she can be like the little Christians in the prisons long ago, in the catacombs. And the brave maidens they were, too, thank God. And I must be going now; I see somebody coming up the walk."

"God bless you, Hannah," said Marie out of a full heart.

Though no word reached her from the Steinberg house during the following days, Marie was able to keep out fierce anxiety from her heart. The brave assurances of Hannah made her feel confident that Rebecca, though in a house of gloom, was subjected to no more insulting words and blows. She interpreted the silence as indicating that Hannah could find no favorable opportunity to use the telephone, that she was too

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constant at her watching to run over to see Marie. She began to banish her fears, when she realized that after all Rebecca could manage to escape from the house, and find shelter in the Ruhlman home.

Consequently Marie fell with growing interest to the tasks of shopping; and as Christmas drew near, she was almost completely absorbed in the arrangements of "her roomful of things." She chatted as merrily as she could with Miss Sanders and Harry Crawford when he came for dinner. They could not speak about Rebecca, having kept the incident secret from Miss Sanders. Once only when they were together for a few minutes did they mention the suddenness of the catastrophe. The rest of the conversations circled about conventional topics, and about the waiting friends in the Chateau d'Anters. Neither was any word spoken in behalf of an unwritten book.

II

Harry Crawford had no heart for his notes and books after the affair at Steinberg's house. For a time he reproached himself for having gone there. Why had he not dared to invent a situation for the converted Jewess of his story? Because, as he went on to review his purposes, he wanted to take a precaution against offending anybody's religious sensibilities; and here was the

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upshot of it all—a Jew had before his very eyes enacted the scene. But then, see what distress, real and living, had to be accounted for. It was not a question of a mere fictitious character in a very tame story; it was a real girl, refined and beautiful, a breaking heart and a tortured soul in Rebecca Steinberg. How was he to undo a chapter out of this bitter history!

Steinberg's door was locked against him; he was certain of that. A letter would be ignored. He tried the telephone; but a sharp clang of the receiver announced to him that Steinberg would not listen.

He paced up and down his room, not deigning to cast a sympathetic glance at his desk and books. He had a box of crumbs at the window, and fed the snowbirds for an hour, hoping to discover some method of appeasing the wrath of Rebecca's father. Had he not assured the unreasonable man of his sincerity, simply and candidly? Why had the old man so hypocritically belied himself?

Yet, there was the gentle Rebecca, beautiful and brave, to think of. He would go and plead her cause; at least he should endeavor to force an ounce of humanity into her father's head.

And a week later, without speaking to Marie about his intention, he walked out to the Steinberg house, to insist on reiterating his disavowal of deceit or trickery, and to tell the man flatly

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that his was the blame for the catastrophe. Had Steinberg spoken his mind truly Rebecca would have had sense enough to remain silent.

He tried to appear calm, as he went up the walk, but his heart was beating fast; he was resolved to be courteous, but to speak his mind, let the old man rage as he would.

By chance Hannah espied him before he reached the veranda, and she ran to the door to warn him away.

"It would be imprudent to enter now," whispered Hannah. "He is dark and gloomy, but he mutters his Jewish words to himself, and they will not hurt Rebecca. We must let things go on quietly," she was whispering rapidly, hoping to get Harry away before Steinberg appeared.

Harry was standing just inside the door, and ready to depart. Suddenly a door down the hall swung open, and out strode the father, his eyes rolling wildly, his lips apart and speechless, and his hands lifted and spread wide as if to shut out the vision of a horrible monster at the door.

"Away from here," he cried, with a choking guttural intonation, as he strode toward the door. "More trickery," he snapped, shaking his head, as he glared at Hannah.

Harry did not move. He did not look defiant; but in his meekness he was not going to step out till Hannah had withdrawn, and he had spoken one or two sentences.

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"I must insist, Mr. Steinberg, that it is no concern of mine—this affair of Rebecca's religious views. You yourself——"

He did not complete the sentence. Steinberg, apparently heedless of the speaker, plunged toward the door. His nostrils were dilated, his breath almost audible, and his hands trembling with passion. Harry set his foot against the door, and braced himself to keep it open till he had finished what he wanted to say.

"I insist again that Rebecca——"

"Out!" cried the father, pushing and tugging at the door.

"Pardon my rude insistence," said Harry calmly, as he stood like iron, heedless of the fury. "I shall ask you to admit that—there, there, you must hear me—that I came here with an honorable purpose, that you courted the researches and discussions, and invited me to come oftener."

"Samuel! Samuel!" cried the father, throwing his hands in the air, with a fierce wail, and stepping back from the door. His eyes, almost insane in their rolling, were fixed now on the pathway leading to the house.

Harry glanced aside, and saw two young men speed up the walk. One of them he recognized as Jack McSweeny, whose photograph he had seen in Rebecca's hands—the drunken fellow who stumbled into Ruhlman's house on a stormy night.

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"Samuel, he has stolen my daughter, robbed her heart from me, stolen, stolen your sister, Rebecca!" The old man was waving his hands frantically at Harry.

Young Steinberg and his pal had leaped up the steps and flung their satchels on the porch.

"I came to make a candid explanation to your father," said Harry with deliberate calmness in his bow toward Samuel.

"Explanation! To the devil with your smooth-faced explanations, you big Harvard bluff," shouted the son. His eyes were glowing, and his big loose lips quivering, as he sprang to the threshold and faced Harry.

"Leave a gentleman's house," said Jack McSweeny, affecting a lofty air, and advancing toward the door.

"Like a gentleman," coolly replied Harry. He waved his hand toward McSweeny to intimate that he should attend to his own business. "Your father," he went on in the face of Samuel's puffing and scowling looks, "invited me here for a historical study and——"

"Out with the robber of my daughter's heart!" the father cried through the hot rage in his throat.

The son swung his left hand at Harry's head; but he fell reeling at his father's feet, as Harry's powerful arm like a flash went up and met Steiny's elbow with stinging force. Jack McSweeny darted forward to contribute his aveng-

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ing might against the brigand of Rebecca. His hand grasped a pocket of Harry's big coat, and leaping back he pulled Crawford from the door, out upon the porch. Steiny sprang forward and landed on Harry's back. McSweeny came on to take another hold; but Harry swung his left hand, and Jack waited for a better chance. The door banged, and the click of the lock was heard. Harry bent forward and shook himself as if he were in a football "lineup." Steiny, with his arm about Crawford's neck, went up in the air when Harry leaned over; and, with a vigorous twist of his supple body, Harry shook off the cursing son, and, as his right arm was disengaging itself, his elbow whipped around and struck like a hammer full on Steiny's nose, flinging him with a thud flat on the veranda. Then as Jack McSweeny raised his foot to kick, Harry moved lithely aside, rushed at Jack, grabbed him with hands of steel, and flung him over the veranda railing into a high mound of snow at the foot of the steps.

Steiny had got to his feet. The blood was spurting from his nose down over his clothes; he banged at the door and called to his father.

"Come in here, Jack," he cried through the half-opened door, his father's huge handkerchief under his nose. "We'll settle that murdering robber to-night."

"No! No!" was the father's bellowed response,

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as he saw McSweeny attempt to enter. "No more of those people in here. He shall not enter."

Harry saw the old man pull his son back into the hallway. The door closed again with a bang and the lock clicked. Jack McSweeny's hand fell from the unyielding knob.

Harry, who turned to leave the porch, saw a policeman coming briskly up the walk. The officer had witnessed the flying form of Jack McSweeny as it shot over the railing. As soon as he reached the steps he caught sight of blood near the door.

"What's all this hubbub?" the policeman asked coolly, eyeing the young men.

"I have no complaint to make, if nobody else has," replied Harry, smiling, and nodding toward McSweeny.

Jack had no comment to make; but he could not conceal a strong trace of desperate fear in his weak cheeks.

"And how about the people inside?" asked the officer, as he stepped forward.

"Knock and see," replied Harry, offering to go to the door. "Here is my card—my address, if I shall be needed."

"And yours?" The policeman turned toward the other.

"Jack McSweeny, 36 Peldon Avenue, or the Social School, Dover Street," he answered, very

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much like a whimper, though he pretended a fearless manner.

Harry Crawford, unskilled in drawing imaginary characters, was quick to take the measure of this real one. This fellow, who could be gallant when he was drunk, acted the poltroon under sobering fear.

The policeman had marked the address in a notebook, and looked at the door.

"The old gentleman has a daughter, and wants no intruders, I think," said Harry with a smile.

"Then why can't you move on?" The officer accepting Crawford's explanation, was addressing McSweeny.

A window screeched as it was lifted through its frozen fastenings, and old Steinberg put his head forward. "Put him away, put him away, and leave us in peace," he whined.

The policeman, thinking that the injunction referred to Jack, grabbed him and held him fast.

"A complaint is it?" asked the policeman. "Do you want him arrested?"

"No," cried the old man, who was fearful of more disgusting notoriety. "Let him go. But make him keep away. Him!" The old man was pointing to Harry. But the officer took the command as bearing on McSweeny, and he pushed him ahead down the stairs.

"Do what you are told, if you are wise," he

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added, "and don't let me see you about these premises again."

Harry walked out briskly to the street, smiling as he went along at the summary expulsion of Jack McSweeny. "If Rebecca will be obliged to listen to her brother's imprecations, at least she will not be molested by this mush-faced dolt. That is something to be thankful for."

He continued his walk, going as far as the Fenway and the Riverbank, before he took a car back to his rooms. He was in no mood for books or thoughts upon a story. He sat before the blazing fire in his study, wondering about a thousand things:—first, if Marie had been a witness of the scene from one of the Ruhlman windows (he half wished she had); and then what had Jack McSweeny in his pretty thoughts now that old Steinberg had cried out about his stolen daughter (Harry, recalling all the details, now remembered that the father had spoken of the stealing of the daughter's heart): and a hundred other thoughts came, always some new topic to reflect upon, as the logs crackled in the fire; and finally, off in the imagined shadows, in the far dreamy depths of the fireplace, he saw the Chateau d'Anters, and the Marquise with Maxwell waiting for Marie and a new book. Then the flames leaped up into the shadowy places, and annihilated the dream-picture.

Harry rose, and looking at his watch, he said,

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anxious for any reason to go out, "I'll go down to the Club for dinner. Hang it, I can't take up the pen till—" he hesitated, "after New Year's." What he should have said, if he had spoken promptly to his first thought, would have been, "till after Marie goes."

He would be candid enough with himself to admit that he was growing fascinated with the visits to Ruhlman's house, and that it was not irksome to go tramping about the downtown stores with Marie and Miss Sanders.

III

On Christmas eve, as Marie came out of the house to observe the weather, before she ventured out to her shopping, she noticed the Steinberg carriage driving along by the tall arbor-vitae hedge, out to the street. The thaw of the day before had rendered sleighing impossible, and the frozen roadways were not any too good for wheels.

The carriage was closed; Marie could not see the occupants. But a few minutes later, as she walked across the street, she noticed Hannah coming from the side door of Steinberg's house. Marie waited for her.

"I am taking a little run to the church, alanna," she said, when Marie had saluted her and heartily given the greetings of the season to the devoted servant. "Rebecca is out driving with her father; they went only this minute ago."

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She motioned with her eyes toward the direction which the carriage had taken.

"Oh, then things are better," queried Marie.

"Peaceful and quiet," said Hannah with a solemn shaking of her head. "The old man—you'd pity him. He speaks in a gentle voice, and with a show of affection, too, though I can't understand a word of the queer talk. He do be trying, I think, to make Rebecca forget the trouble, and to be again as they used to be. And Rebecca, poor child, tries her best to be smiling, and she goes reading in the library. But it's little heart she has for them same books, poor child."

There was a pause in the talk, as the two women walked over a crossing.

Hannah spoke again, in her kindly, intimate fashion. "And while they are out, I am running over to church—to confession. God forgive me for the scolding I have had to do." She gave one of her quaint little laughs. "And I'll have a chance to go to the Midnight Mass to-night, so then I'll have the whole day for Rebecca, and perhaps I'll have my own Christmas, unless the old father doesn't want me to talk about the Blessed Feast to his daughter. Sure I never thought the harmless talk of a poor silly person like myself would hurt any learned man, woman, or child." She looked up with another of her droll smiles.

"But the Midnight Mass, Hannah," said Ma-

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rie, when she found a pause for a word; "do you think you could let me accompany you. I want to attend the Midnight Mass—as I used to do in Nova Scotia, in the convent," and in a merry little tone, "hundreds of years ago."

"Hear that now," said Hannah to the pleasantry. "Sure I'll call for you; many of the girls will be going along the roads and we'll have lots of company."

"I'll have Uncle's car take us," Marie suggested with a jubilant tone.

"But it's the rich riding you want us to have, alanna, when walking is good enough for us on a night like this—the night when the Blessed Mother had to walk out the bitter road to a cave in the hillside in Bethlehem."

"But the distance to the chapel where the Midnight Mass is to be, isn't it far?" asked Marie.

"Over there in the Carmelite chapel," Hannah spoke as if that was just across the lawn.

"Three or four miles; and a black, cold night; and therefore we'll have the car," said Marie with a tone of finality. "I'll have time to go to confession when I finish a little shopping in town. And tell me, Hannah," she was parting with the servant to wait for a trolley car at the corner. "I must get a few presents for Rebecca while I am at the store. Do you think you could prevail on her father to let her receive them?"

"I think it will be easy," said Hannah, bowing

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her head. "Sure he lets me do anything now, thinking that he is winning Rebecca back to his way of thinking, poor man. And I can't help feeling that he wants to please me, afraid is it, he is, I may run off some day and tell the town about his capers of the other days. But God forgive me for talking against me neighbor." She laughed and struck her breast, as if making a public confession. "I have enough to tell, and I'll deserve a good penance; but I'll be going now, Marie, alanna, and I'll come over for you to-night." Hannah turned at the street corner and went off toward the church, her lips moving in simple prayer.

As midnight drew on, Marie kept a joyous vigil. Earlier in the evening, when she returned from the church, and had disposed of a score of Christmas presents, she took a little refreshing nap. At ten o'clock she was seated before the great fireplace in her uncle's study, reading the Evangelist's narration of the first Christmas night, and endeavoring, as well as she could, to realize in the vivid pictures of her imagination the inspiring scenes of the Nativity. What if Rebecca were with her, she mused during a break in the contemplation; if Rebecca could only come and share with her these thoughts— these inspiring pictures of the Saviour's Birth—when Love and Meekness and Humility were born into the world. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs

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is the Kingdom of God," Marie was saying almost aloud, a holy light in her eyes, as they held a far-off, undying scene. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Thereupon her thoughts ran aside to Harry Crawford's book. "He must have persecution triumph in his story," she said; "that is foretold, too, that the persecuted shall win the pearl beyond all price."

She was not allowed to stay long upon this allusion to the young author's work. The telephone rang, much to her surprise at that hour of night, and, stranger still, Harry Crawford was speaking.

"I passed your house a few minutes ago. I had been with some little Christmas remembrances out to Brookline to an old servant of mother's, and I had to notice that all your windows were lighted."

"I am going to Midnight Mass with Rebecca's maid, Hannah, and one of our girls, over to the Carmelite convent."

"Oh," exclaimed Harry; though he did not know what was meant by Midnight Mass and had never been inside a convent. He caught Marie's tone of joy, and he added, "Isn't that splendid!"

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"Oh, are you going?" Marie misinterpreted Harry's rejoinder.

"Are men to be admitted?" he asked.

"Why certainly, to the chapel," she said brightly; "that, you know, is not in the cloister."

But Harry did not know either that or what was implied in the word cloister. He was ready enough to learn, and he asked, "Where is the convent, and at what time are the doors open?"

"If you are going, Harry, let me send the car for you in a half hour; then you can come along with us."

Harry made a little protest about the trouble this would cause, but his mild reluctance was easily banished by Marie's emphatic denials. And in three minutes she was telling the butler "to send James with the limousine at eleven to Mr. Harry Crawford at this address." She held up a little card with the street number written on it.

Marie settled herself again before the fireplace, and after another brief contemplation about Bethlehem, she went up to her room for some minutes to pray. Hannah was praying with Marie's maid in the servants' room. Silence reigned throughout the house. Thought itself was so peaceful and calm, said Marie, as she came down from her prayers, and fell into a long, rambling reminiscence before the fire. One by one, incidents of blessed Christmas eves in the convent

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in Nova Scotia came before her and seemed so wonderfully beautiful in the golden glow about the hearth. There—she could hear the sweet echoing hymns that the Sisters were singing as they went down the long corridors and the winding stairs to the chapel. There was Sœur Julie's voice—the deep rich alto, and she was singing a Latin line, *"Christus natus hodie,"* while the soprano voices were calling jubilantly, *"Noël! Noël!"*. And down in the quiet Acadian village, the great church-bell was sending its glad voice over the broad fields, across the valley and even to the poor little cottages in the hills where the Micmac Indians lived.

The chugging of the car, as it swung around a corner and took the incline, brought Marie to her feet. A long pause followed, and she wondered what was the matter. She stepped into an unlighted room and looked out. The automobile was backing carefully down the drive. At the gateway it stopped; somebody jumped out, and ran down the street, followed by the chauffeur. Marie's wonderment almost sent her out upon the porch. She rang for the butler and told him to put on his coat and walk down to the gate. And after five minutes of her anxious waiting, she saw the men return to the car. Harry wore an excited look when he entered the library; even his effort to show delight at the big warm fireplace could not conceal the revelation which his

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eyes told. And he noticed, too, a slight questioning in Marie's eyes, as he tried to say that the midnight air was biting, and that Marie should wrap up well.

"James didn't run over somebody?" She had to put a tentative question about the cause of the delay on the driveway.

Harry laughed at the evident pretext to discover the reason of the stop. "I can't say that he did. Nobody in the street out this way." And then after a pause, he offered the explanation. "I noticed a bothersome fellow standing in the shadows down near Steinberg's hedge."

"The man you threw over the veranda the other day?" queried Marie.

Harry did not answer immediately, keeping his eyes toward the fire, and rubbing his hands close to the mantle.

"You saw that?" he asked.

"Hannah told me—and I was not surprised, for Uncle mentioned in a letter that you had been a famous football player."

Harry laughed away this piece of biography, though in his heart he was pleased to learn that letters, other than those from the Chateau d'Anters, had contained some mention of him.

"Yes, the same fellow," he replied, trying to make light of the matter. "I conjectured that a fellow standing out in the cold at such an hour must have been drinking. It is no heroic wis-

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dom to have sped him on so that he may not go around ringing doorbells and shouting songs that sound harsh at Christmas time."

He did not inform Marie that Jack McSweeny on this occasion was very sober, nor that he had seen Samuel Steinberg earlier that very evening downtown with a young lady on his arm, who was not Rebecca Steinberg. Harry kept his surmises to himself. He was not anxious to make a rash judgment, but he had to feel that Jack McSweeny was not hiding in midnight shadows for the sake of his health. Was it after all probable that Jack McSweeny had stolen a key to the Steinberg house out of Samuel's easy pocket? What was to prevent Jack from using the key, while Samuel was out of the house? But perhaps those were far-fetched suspicions. Howbeit, while Marie Ruhlman was upstairs getting ready for the trip to the convent, Harry Crawford went quietly to the telephone, and in whispered tones he gave a message to the nearest police-station. "If the officer who was on this beat last Wednesday afternoon is there, he will understand." Then Harry gave his own name, and his present telephone number. "I have no definite complaint to make; I merely do not want to see the old man and his daughter disturbed at this time of night."

When Marie entered the room clad in her furs, her beautiful eyes dancing with delight,

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and a glow of deep peace and joy on her countenance, Harry promptly diverted his thoughts from the exasperating scene of the past few minutes. Yet he found that he had not much to talk about as the car sped on over the hard roads. He was extremely ignorant, he felt, on this matter of Catholic practices and ceremonies. He had often in his classbooks glanced at pictures of ancient religious ceremonies, and noted with passing curiosity a paragraph descriptive of them: Roman festal days with countless statues of pagan gods standing in gardens; Greek maidens in their long flowing robes; and old bearded seers walking solemnly toward a stately temple upon a hill; and Babylonian bas-reliefs and ornaments, showing flat faces of people who were fixed in a thoughtless, hopeless pose. He had heard lectures about Confucius and Zoroaster, and the religious rites of Eastern nations. But though he lived almost within a stone's throw of three Catholic churches he had never been inside one, nor had he, as far as he could recall now in the silence of the car, ever read anything about Catholic ceremonies, though he was intimately acquainted with many men and women of that faith. He had a present reason for feeling his loss in this regard. There was Marie Ruhlman; he ought to be cultured enough to know something, howsoever general the knowledge, about her religion and its churches—whether, for instance, the choir

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was the main functionary of the service, or whether the priest was always there—would there be a priest at this Midnight Mass? And not being able to speak without fear of blunders, he joined in the silence which the others were keeping.

During the Mass, Harry was rapt in deep wonderment. It was a long time since he had been in any church; surely never before, he thought, was there such impressiveness. A few simple voices were singing in the organ-loft; yet how the music thrilled. There was the priest, and two little boys before him, coming out to the lighted altar. They genuflected, the priest ascended the steps, he opened a book, he returned to the foot of the altar—on and on Harry went with eyes on every movement, noting that everything was done with such assurance, with solemnity and reverence; everybody, even the servant girls in a near-by pew, understanding the various actions; all in sympathy, as if the altar and the Mass were a great heart that was united intimately with the hearts of the silent worshippers. How could he delve deeply into these mysteries in one short observation.

Again, after a little bell had rung, Marie and all the others arose and went slowly and with bowed heads toward the altar-rail. One by one they returned, after receiving the little white Host. Harry, though his own head was mod-

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estly bowed, managed to see Marie as she returned to the pew, her hands clasped before her breast, her eyes cast down, and a glow upon her beautiful face such as an artist might labor in vain to depict. "Surely," thought he, "she has touched her lips at the holy springs of joy. She has breathed a Christmas air of peace of which the world knows not." And he closed his eyes, and had his thoughts. Strange that his mind brought up a strong remembrance of his mother in her young motherhood, when he was a child prattling at her side. The chapel air was an inspiration to innocence.

A second Mass began. Marie whispered to Harry that she would tarry only a few minutes to finish her prayers. He did not know that this sweet, charming girl in the fullness of her own joy was praying for him, and for the success of a book that he had yet to write. Over in another bench Hannah was beseeching that same loving Christ, who had prophesied the total destruction of Jerusalem, "to give His graces to the poor child, Rebecca."

Out upon the street again, the party chatted merrily as they went to the cosy limousine. Marie hoped that Harry was not tired. Wouldn't it be splendid if they could see some real shepherds go across the fields, and then they, too, would get out and follow them, and try to find a manger on a hillside. Hannah was chatting

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with Marie's maid; but when Harry undertook to ask her if she had said a prayer for him, she replied that she remembered him every morning in her prayers, and then with a playful tone she asked, "Did the black iron bars and spikes in the convent scare you?"

He looked to Marie for help to interpret the question; and she explained the cloister lattices which he had noticed along the upper walls of the sanctuary.

"And it's the good souls there that do be praying for us day and night," said Hannah when she found a proper moment to speak.

Harry was put down at his door; but the car waited, at his request, till he returned from his chambers. His hands held little packages. "These were to go to you in the morning," he said, placing two little boxes in her hands, "but it's morning now, and never put off—you know the adage." He had not forgotten the two servant girls; there were also packages for them. "And I wish I could send something to Rebecca, but I do not wish to displease her father."

"She'll know of the kindly thought," Hannah whispered," and Rebecca will be grateful." The merry voice of Marie was bidding him all the blessed Christmas wishes, and her hand was waving to Harry, as the car sped away to the Ruhlman house under the great pathways of stars.

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IV

A table loaded with presents greeted Marie's eyes when she came down to breakfast in the morning. Mr. Ruhlman had arranged this detail in a letter to Miss Sanders. "I feel sure that some packages will arrive from the d'Anters," he wrote. "Put them aside, as well as other parcels which will come to Marie, and bring them forth on Christmas morning. Marie has a child's heart and will remember the simple joys of former greetings in her Nova Scotia school."

And it was with the jubilant exclamations of an exulting child that Marie had her hour with Santa Claus. From the little school in the north came countless linens and laces, done with such care, breathing a rich fragrance of the balsamic airs, and whiter for the delicate hands of the nuns which had woven them. The convent in Washington sent other gracious mementos, among them a precious volume of the "Imitation," several of the pages showing illuminated letters which Mother Loyola had made. One, two, three—she was counting the articles from the Chateau d'Anters, and taking a long time to look at Maxwell's picture, in his broad white collar; and then upon the back of the picture, the words, "To Marie, from her friend Maxwell, with remembrance to Mr. Crawford."

Marie an hour later attended the High Mass at the parish church. She had arranged, accord-

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ing to her uncle's request, to have Harry Crawford at dinner.

"I have written him, too," the uncle's letter said. "He keeps bachelor's hall, and will be glad, I think, to be at a family fireside for the evening."

Naturally enough, after dinner, when the little group sat before the great blazing fire, talk turned toward the trip across the ocean and to the expectant eyes at the Chateau d'Anters. Marie would like to accept Harry's invitation to meet Lady McCornish in England; "but the itinerary was already mapped out with the utmost precision; any deviation from it, howsoever small, might upset dynasties in Europe, and leave Marie a lost child upon the streets." Whereupon Miss Sanders laughed, as well as Marie and Harry.

"When the other girls take their places at school in Paris, I am going to Issy, to Sœur Julie's old aunt; *Rue Boudin, numero cinque.*" Marie's eyes twinkled to signify that she was certain of the address.

"And leave the dear Madame d'Anters disconsolate?" queried Harry, lifting his eyes in a play of surprise. "Maxwell will be brokenhearted, too, if he can not show you the great glass-house and ten thousand flowers, and the squirrels scampering up the oak-tree."

"Issy will be a base just for a while," Marie answered, shaking her head against any intention

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to neglect d'Anters. "Sœur Julie thinks that a servant of her aunt's will be always ready to take me in and out for sightseeing about Paris. The house is on a hill near a fort, and I am to have the best of air, says Sœur Julie, and also be a kindly distance from the mundane hubbub of the city." After a pause, wherein she noticed that Miss Sanders was arranging music at the piano, she added, "I shall have opportunities for the festive week-ends with Madame. Claireville is quite near to Issy, I understand. Sœur Julie knows the convent at Claireville."

"You are not asking Marie to sing, Mr. Crawford," remarked Miss Sanders, when the little conversation seemed to have exhausted the topic of travel.

"Everybody can sing on Christmas," was Marie's rejoinder, as she arose. "You meant to say that I have not asked Harry to sing." She stood radiant before him, and dropped him a graceful curtsy.

"I am a good, solid exception even to the general multitude on Christmas," he replied, as he flicked the ashes from his cigar into the fire.

Marie without any reluctance went toward the piano, hearing Miss Sanders playing the prelude of a favorite song. She bowed toward Harry, and lifted her sweet soprano voice to the notes of a tender piece by Nevins. How delicately flowing was the beautiful melody, and how ap-

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propriately suited to it was this pure, musical voice. Had the composer imagined just such an interpretation, thought Harry. His whole soul was attentive. What a beautiful surprise this was. And yet he should have been quick to divine that Marie could sing—a beauty like hers should be possessed of an angel's voice.

"Madame d'Anters will go into ecstasies," was his comment after his applause. "She will keep you singing all the time."

"But how is she to know?" Marie was even more angelic in her graceful modesty. "I do not want to hurt the Chateau's repute for music." Then with a bright smile, turning again toward the piano, "I shall sing for Maxwell, when he is tired of romping and play, and of course at the convent I shall sing a little hymn which Sœur Julie taught me."

Thereupon she sang the quaint hymn with its French words and unusual melody. Then followed some Christmas music, one piece being that sweet lullaby, "The Coventry Carol," and finally "Noël," in which Miss Sanders and Harry were requested to sing.

They were chatting at the fireside, and Miss Sanders had gone to give orders for some refreshments in the dining-room. The late hour came all too quickly for Harry. He had enjoyed a new Christmas, from one midnight almost to the next one. He had not written a line of his

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proposed book, but he had experiences that were richer than literature and more interesting to him than the small productions of his or any other pen. He could easily discern that Marie had all the open candor of a friendly child toward him, that she could not have been so unaffectedly natural and kindly intimate toward him if they had grown up together from childhood. So he fancied, as he drew on his overcoat. But when at the door he took her hand, and she lifted it toward his lips, Harry Crawford pressed the warm, tender fingers to his kiss, and went out as if walking on the air, all the melodies with Marie's sweet voice accompanying him along the quiet streets.

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CHAPTER X

THE LETTER

I

EMOTIONS of sorrow and grief did not afflict Marie Ruhlman when she came to take her departure from Boston and go aboard the great steamer at the harbor dock. Her intimate friends in town were not numerous; her vacations from school during the past years, since her return from Nova Scotia, had found her content to cultivate the few families with whom she became acquainted through the affectionate regard of her schoolmates. The winter seasons, beyond the little week of holidays, were spent in the convent; and Marie had little opportunity to extend her circle of social festivities in Boston.

But she knew intimately a host of friends throughout the country and in the maritime provinces—the dear associates of her schooldays. They had word of Marie's journey, most of them through the notification of Sœur Julie; and they sent their loving missives to greet Marie at the boat. Her uncle arranged with the purser to have a little package handed to Marie every morning at breakfast; and Harry Crawford brought down to the ship a large album of foreign pictures. "If you do not throw it overboard," he remarked, placing it on a divan in the

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stateroom, "you might let Maxwell use it for an illustrated lecture to you some story-night in the great tower."

The boat was to sail shortly after midnight from the East Boston dock. Friends who had come to say *bon voyage* went ashore after nine o'clock. But the gangway was not removed till ten. Consequently Mr. Ruhlman, who arrived in Boston an hour before, had a few minutes aboard the boat. A cold, heavy mist stood over the waters, too chilling to allow them to continue the conversation on the open deck. Ruhlman would have preferred the unlit corner of an outer place for the meeting; he did not relish the scrutinizing glances that Marie might give him in the lighted salon. He was fully conscious that he had not seen Marie for over a year, that he had not managed to be home for one hour during her Christmas vacation, that she was a woman now and very probably she had questions to ask, howsoever delicately she should put them, and that although the wide ocean was going to separate them, she might want to know just how she was his niece; what relation was her father to him? Ruhlman winced before the possible question, and for a moment he was on the point of resolving to send a long telegram of good wishes instead of going to the boat. No. He hastened up the gangway, and sent a steward to tell Miss Marie Ruhlman that her uncle had arrived. Her uncle

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would explain to her in due time; he would send her, toward the close of her jolly outing in Europe, a letter to tell her the entire history.

Marie, however, was not bothered with reflections upon her genealogy; her heart was overflowing with joyous gratitude for the manifold kindnesses of her uncle. She ran up the broad, gilded stairway ahead of Hannah and Harry Crawford and threw her arms around her uncle's neck, and in a few moments was leading him down to the stateroom, enumerating, as she went, the many salutations and presents that came to her. Mr. Ruhlman, as Marie's uncle, was introduced to the chaperone and the girls of the party.

When they had inspected Marie's stateroom and had said a word of praise for each of the presents on the chairs and divan, the four went up to a salon. Harry, thinking that Mr. Ruhlman wanted to be alone with Marie, drew aside with Hannah. And Marie directly narrated her urgent story about Rebecca to her uncle.

"Hannah came down with me," she was saying; "and see this note she brought from Rebecca. There are her own words, Uncle Ruhlman; here they are in writing." And she read them, holding the note before Ruhlman's eyes.

"I feel that I must tell you, Marie," the letter said, after the wishes for a happy journey, "that I am resolved to be a Christian. This is not a sudden decision. I have come to it after three

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years of thought and prayer. Perhaps your own good self and our little association had something to do with it; and perhaps Hannah's living religion was an inspiration. But when Mr. Crawford's argument lay open before me, after his many clear discussions with father, I had to decide, possessing now intellectual conviction for that which before appealed so strongly to my feelings. But my feelings, as you see, dear Marie, did not lead to my decision. Was not the argument clear? Christ, of whose history, of whose words, we are surer than of any contemporaneous event, proved that He was a great prophet, a divine messenger, sent of God. And did He not say that He was the Messiah, and did He not prove it in countless ways, not merely in the prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem? He made good His claims, and He has said, 'Follow me.' There—I must be a Christian.

"I did not mean to weary you with all this, dear Marie. You have long since recognized that Christ, who asserted that He was the Son of God, proved His claims. You know all this—perhaps you will pray hard that I attain to the fulness of the faith. I know my poor father will be broken-hearted; I will do all I can to spare him. But there is a higher command to be obeyed—the irrefutable words of this same Christ, recorded forever by the Hebrew Matthew—'He that lov-

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eth father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that taketh not up his cross and followeth Me, is not worthy of Me.' Pray that I be not afraid of the Cross, dear Marie."

"Has Harry read this?" asked Mr. Ruhlman in the silence that followed.

Marie was folding the letter, and her eyes were dim through tears of love. "I have not shown it to him," answered Marie. "Should I?"

"Not now," he answered; "later, perhaps, it will be more interesting. Rebecca has gone farther in his own argument than he sees now."

Ruhlman rose and moved slowly toward the gangway; knowing that Harry was acquainted with the present religious distress at the Steinberg house, he touched upon that topic. "Perhaps I can prevail upon the old man to consider the situation," he added. "I will not gainsay in the least any of his own sincere feelings or convictions in religion; but he must listen to a word about the rights of others. Rebecca has a mind, she has her inalienable right." He spoke solemnly, as one who would carry his point.

Then, as an officer went along the deck to bid those ashore who were going ashore, hurrying forms flitted along the decks and down the stairs, and Marie's visitors with them. The house d'Anters was remembered with a score of messages from Ruhlman and Harry. Hannah from a little distance assured Marie that she would

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take abundant care for "the poor girl at home. And if the time ever came when Rebecca should be sent out of the house, Hannah Bradley would take walking-papers with her."

Marie kissed the devoted servant, and then her uncle, promising him a letter every day. Then turning to Harry, who had been so constantly with her all through the holidays, she looked with her affectionate eyes into his, and lifted her hand to his lips, and then drew his strong, warm hand to her own kiss.

The gangway was empty and hauled to the deck. The lights went out one by one, and Marie, still waving her hand as she moved toward the cabin, went in with tears in her eyes, down to her room.

"I wonder who this can be?" she was looking at a photograph, anxious for any reason to take her thoughts from her departed friends. "I wonder why Uncle Ruhlman sent this along."

It was a picture of an ordinary-looking man, with a clear face, firm lines of a business mould about his mouth, a light, thin moustache, and eyes that seemed to be looking away in perplexity. "I wonder who this can be!" she said over and over again; "and why did Uncle Ruhlman send it?"

She was too tired after the long, busy day of farewells to continue in her wonderment. The deep silence invited her to sleep. And when she

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awoke in the morning and came out upon deck, the great ship was out beyond the harbor islands, out upon the wide, cold sea. She had dreamed of new lands, of a great, warm, lighted castle among gardens and trees and that a sad, sweet voice, far off but distinct, was calling for Marie d'Anters.

"Over there is Nova Scotia," said the captain to several girls, as the sun was setting upon that first day at sea.

"And over there," said Marie in that playful air which had already won her the regard of the passengers, "is Sœur Julie; and over there," she stood on tiptoe and pointed eastward, as if to a near place beyond the horizon, "is the house d'Anters."

II

When Mr. Ruhlman reached his house on the night that Marie sailed, he went to his study and drew from a pocket the mysterious letter which, during the past years, had been kept sometimes on Marie's desk and then, when she was at home, carefully enveloped and placed in his coat pocket, going with him wherever he went.

He had it before him as he sat under the glow of the table-light. The old seal was broken, and he tore off the envelope. He pressed back its pages carefully and began to reread it, as if anxious to see that it was worded with sufficient clearness, that its explanation would be unmistakable.

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"DEAR MARIE: I write this in August, 1910. I propose to place it where you will find it, if any accident happens to me; and if by the time you are of age this letter has not been read by you, I will forward it to you, wherever you are, and await your judgment upon its contents. You shall see why, even if I have endeavored in several ways to give you many services, I have in other ways appeared distant to you, odd, perhaps, as, for instance, never or rarely ever being here when you came home.

"When you were a little child—perhaps nearly two years old—a man who gave his name as David Morton came to my office in town to negotiate a loan of ten thousand dollars. He showed me some glowing accounts from a friend of his in the Alaskan gold-fields. David Morton wanted to borrow money of me to go there. He would purchase a piece of property in a promising district and pay to me one-half of the profits. By the terms of the contract which he proposed I should receive fifty per cent of the fortune-making returns.

"Though David Morton was an utter stranger to me, I did not reject this chimerical proposition. Two things contributed to make me susceptible to the scheme: First (and now in later years I need courage to speak of it), my absorbing ambition to become rich; and secondly, the glowing letter, apparently *bona fide,* written by his friend

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in Alaska, and left with me for any assuring investigations that I wished to make. Yet I did not act at once. I put off the transaction for a few days, fearful, however, that perhaps David Morton might find another to advance the money, and so lose to me the wonderful chance of a fortune in the fifty per cent dividend. I hinted at the need of a security or a reputable bondsman; went to the hotel where David Morton was staying, to learn what I could about him through secret observations. I was loath to make a public contract, because of the very large profit which was stipulated. You have read in your books, dear Marie, the burning sentences about the exactions of money-lending Jews. I did not want to have them repeated on my head.

"I was, however, so possessed by a feeling of insecurity that on the last night of our negotiations I was on the point of withdrawing from further parley—yet reluctant, even then, to lose my prospect of a quickly-made fortune—when he took me to his room (we had been sitting in the lobby of the hotel) and he had his child sent for by a servant.

"The child was you, Marie. 'Here,' said David Morton, 'here is my bond. This is my child. I will leave it under your eyes, in your disposal, here in Boston; and if I do not satisfy the terms of the loan, then I can not claim this child when I return.'

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"He spoke with every air of truthfulness. I noticed that the little child, you, Marie, drew fondly to his arms and understood the little pet phrases which he whispered in French.

"Why need I describe the manner in which we drew up our agreement? The following day I gave him the money. Marie was brought to my house. He had his sum of money and I had a precious bond—surely he would respect it—his own little daughter. Yet I must write down now in blushing shame my acceptance of the bond, my own ignoble part in the transaction, even though during these nineteen years I have, I hope, done my best with honor for the welfare of Marie. Again I confess my fault, the secret which now you alone know with me, unless David Morton be alive.

"I never heard from him again. I wrote to the person named as his friend in the Alaskan letter and received no reply. To others I dared not speak. I was ashamed of my transaction; and even if ten thousand dollars went with it, I preferred to keep my secret rather than find the defaulter, if such he was, and have upon my name the obloquy of the entire country, and serve as a butt for savage stories. Whether David Morton be alive or dead I know not."

Here on the margin of the letter Ruhlman wrote on that night when Marie had sailed, "It was his picture which I sent to your stateroom.

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You may have seen it before, above your desk, and wondered at it." Then he continued his reading.

"I was at a loss to know how to proceed when you were there in my house—a helpless little child at my disposal. My wife had died a short time before, and my two children died before their mother. My little house had but one servant, and she was going to leave me. That at least was fortunate; for when the new servant came I called you my niece, Marie Ruhlman. That has been your name ever since. Need I say that it has grown very dear to me? For, though fortune grew with me, in my earnest and steady application to business, I know of nothing that was more in my thoughts than you. The sweet little letters which you wrote regularly to me from your childhood home in Nova Scotia gradually won my heart's affection, and brightened a world which was all filled with voices of intrigue and money-making. Despite the secret shame which I continued to have with regard to the manner of your adoption, I came to entertain a feeling of romantic interest in your welfare, and this grew into an absorbing devotion, the effects of which in your case I do not presume to state. To me they were a reward of inexpressible delight—a constant solace in my round of business pursuits. I received in payment of another kind more than a fifty per cent of an Alaskan field.

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"This, then, is your story, unembellished in its narrative, plain and truthful. It doubtless will be a shock to you; you will be touched by poignant sorrow at the news of this recital. But distress will not be lasting. I know your heart of joyous courage; you have a character to support any storm that may beat upon you, even if you were to be left alone. Your education is such as I could have wished for my dearest daughter. I sent you to Catholic schools, though I did not have David Morton's advice in this matter. I do not think that he was Catholic, as he wore a Masonic badge. But as you answered to the name of Marie, and as you lisped some little French words, I conjectured, perhaps aright, that your mother was French. That explains why I took you to a French school in Nova Scotia. You have been brought up Catholic. Let me say, though I am one who has never professed that faith, that you have the religion of abiding strength and joy; yet, as you are now of age, it is for you to elect to continue therein. I say no more upon this point.

"Now, about the future. That, too, is for you to elect. After the first feelings of the bewildering surprise will have worn away, think kindly of me, and may you continue to keep those relations which have been yours since you were under my care. If it were in my power, I would readily and gladly give you back into your mother's arms. I shall not speak of impossi-

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bilities. I merely say, in this brief but hearty final word, that this is to be your home, as long as you wish it—yours, as if you were my own daughter; and when I go, you shall not be in want; you shall fare as well as if your father had found an Alaskan gold-field.

"Again I ask you, dear Marie, to keep me sometimes in your sweet, kindly thoughts, and let a scene of two decades ago be forgotten in the light of the sincere, devoted efforts of one whom you have always loved as—your Uncle Ruhlman."

An indescribable glow of sweetness lingered upon Ruhlman's face and seemed to radiate to the paper and back again into his tender eyes. Confession is good for the soul. The hard, angular lines about his mouth, which the years of strenuous business pursuits had marked, fell into softer and more delicate meaning. In his thoughts there was no memory of the lost ten thousand dollars, no allusion to years of anxiety and continual expenditures on Marie's welfare. A sense of shame over a hasty bond, which was a little, helpless child, lost its blush and left a touch of hope and love. The story had been told, unembellished, unvarnished, as he had said. Marie was left to her judgment; she was free to select the issues. But Mr. Ruhlman was not without a solacing hope that the little child who had grown into his life would return to share his magnificent

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home, and that when she would marry, a welcome to her home would always be awaiting him.

The warmth and the light of that fond hope grew more radiant upon his face as he sealed the letter and went up to place it on Marie's desk.

III

That very night, though now the midnight hour had sounded from the hallway clock, Ruhlman wrote a little note to old Steinberg. It was an odd thing to do, considering that by waiting till the morning Ruhlman might have communicated with Rebecca's father over the telephone or walked down the pathway and through the hedge and spoken his words full in the old man's face. But Ruhlman wanted to preclude any unfair advantage which a sudden visit might afford him. He could wait a day till his letter had gone to the post-office and been brought to Steinberg. The Jew could read it and be fully prepared to answer it when the writer called.

"It would be hypocritical on my part," the note said, "not to state at the very outset that I am acquainted with the recent occurrence which has occasioned so much distress in your home. I candidly assure you that I feel intensely the pain which has come to you and Rebecca. Yet with equal candor I say most emphatically that you do an injustice to your daughter, and I am coming over to insist on this point. Rebecca is no

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longer a child. If she were, she would be in duty bound to abide by your decision. But she is a grown woman, with her own intelligent mind and her firm will. What the grounds are of the recent expression of her religious determination perhaps you know. But you certainly can recall the answer you made to Mr. Crawford—an answer which prompted Rebecca to profess her desire to be a Christian. But let that pass. You know as well as I do that Mr. Crawford went for honorable and honest inquiry to your house. That much must be admitted in his regard. Whether the argument in his story is convincing or not to you and me is altogether another matter. I have nothing to say in criticism of your religious contentions. You know that I was in earlier years an orthodox Israelite like yourself. I am able now to appreciate your feelings. But it happens that Rebecca has grounds for choosing another religion. She is a woman, I repeat; she has her own mind and will; and you must do justice to her right in this matter. This is what I mean to speak more about when I call to see you soon. You will not deny me the privilege of seeing you and Rebecca."

Two days later he walked over to Steinberg's door, and without any hesitation he rang the bell. He had his own strong reasons for feeling that the old man would not dare to lock him out. Ruhlman was not a person to make unnecessary

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threats, nor delight in seeing an old man tremble and cower under menacing frowns and a cutting word about the prospect of financial losses. There were records in hidden vaults to show how helpful a friend Mr. I. Ruhlman had been in years past, when Steinberg was a poor, half-starved huckster from Russia; and there were investments now to the Steinberg credit which Mr. I. Ruhlman could topple over and send to insignificant values. Surely the doorbell would be answered to Mr. Ruhlman; no provocation or distemper would court a look of disfavor or invite the whisper of his wrath.

Hannah opened the door and ushered Mr. Ruhlman into the library. The room was cold, the shades drawn, and a few books lay in disorder upon the table. Usually the library looked neat, the shelves in perfect order, and the air inviting in its brightness and warmth.

Ruhlman stood at the table and glanced at the books, while Hannah went to notify her master. One of the books contained a ribbon-mark and opened at the chapter which described the Russian rabbinical schools at Wilna and Zhitomir. Here was a paragraph about the *maskalim,* "the friends of light," who believed in the regeneration of Israel by means of the knowledge of Hebrew and German. Ruhlman recognized names well known to him as promoters of these Russianizing schools—Sir Moses Montefiore;

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and Oovarof, who proposed to force the Jews to study their own language; and Dr. Lilienthal, who discovered the *maskalim* while traveling as an agent of the Russian government. Upon the margin of the page and written in Steinberg's hand was a short note in Yiddish admonishing Samuel to study these pages about the Eastern rabbinical schools. Ruhlman marveled at this note, for he was under an impression that these Russian seminaries were ill suited to the work of preparing zealous students in Zion's cause; that they gave a good secular but a poor Jewish education, and that none of their graduates attained prominence as Talmudists. He had read that even at the great school of Warsaw, which flourished under the auspices of these teachers, not one of the pupils for nearly a half century of the school's existence became a rabbi.

Was the old man asleep, queried Ruhlman of himself, to advise his son to study the history of these *maskalim?*

Hannah came in upon his reflections to announce with a very dubious tone that Mr. Steinberg was confined to his room and begged of Mr. Ruhlman to come another day.

"I'll go up to see him, Hannah," answered Ruhlman directly. "Tell him that I will come up to see him." It was said with a voice of determination and in accents of finality, yet with marked kindness. Perhaps the old man in his

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room at the head of the stairs overheard the pronouncement.

While Hannah was gone with the message, Ruhlman picked up another book, its flyleaf stating that it was a gift to Samuel from a fellow-student in New York. It was a neat volume, in modern binding of blue and gold, of the Yiddish poems of Morris Rosenfeld, and opposite each poem was an English translation by a Harvard professor.

Ruhlman was not surprised that Hannah did not return immediately, and while waiting he ran his eye over the sad lamentations of the young poet of the sweatshops, the recurring refrains of gloom and despair, utterly hopeless because no string of this modern harp would echo a note of promise or give an assuring tone of deliverance from woe. Life moves in a sea of tears, under the scowling blackness of an unending night. Ruhlman sensed the despair from the modern Ghetto as he read the lines of "The Eternal Mystery."

"Gloomy thoughts awaken in my breast deep terrors, thinking, O black abyss!—thinking that our life, our actions, conduct, words, and striving are but a shadow, a dream!

"O dark Infinity! O mute Incomprehensibility! Shall my thinking be all in vain? Everything you slay and kill, everything you snatch

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away, everything you carry away, silent Nothing, silent All!"

"This is one of their voices," said Ruhlman, as he put down the book of the young Jewish poet. "No joyousness, black gloom, stagnation and despair. Ugh! Eyes that see not and ears that will not hear, and hearts that will not understand. See what a contrast in Marie! How sure is her foundation of joy, how explicable to her seems the world-drama which crushes this poor, wailing poet."

He stepped toward the hallway, confident that Hannah was approaching to bid him to Steinberg's chamber.

"This is not against your doctor's orders," Ruhlman alluded to his visit, feeling in his heart that Steinberg's illness was not of a nature to have demanded medical treatment. "Instead of aggravating your malady, my few words will, I trust, tend toward your recovery." This was not intended as sarcasm.

Old Steinberg, seated in a deep-cushioned chair, his head bowed and a look of defeat on his face, was pitiable to see. Sickness of body could not have stricken him into such an appearance of gloomy helplessness. He muttered some words, perhaps a forced greeting in Judeo-German, and then wagging his beard, while his

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glassy eyes still stared at the floor, he spoke in English. "I have a sickness that is beyond medicine. And talking does not help it." There was an accent of rebuff in his last sentence.

"You can cure it yourself," Ruhlman gave a summary rejoinder. He was not going to wheedle imaginary sickness.

"I say, you can cure it yourself," he repeated, when the old man continued his sullen silence. Ruhlman drew a chair toward Steinberg.

"I am not given to the practice of annoying people, you know well, Steinberg, you who have treated with me so intimately these many years. You can not have forgotten the many interests we have had in common; you have never found me wanting in co-operation to any of your concerns in the past."

He paused for a few moments. Nothing but the deep breathing and a suppressed sighing from Steinberg disturbed the silence. He had the aspect of one who was awaiting the surgeon's knife.

"I was a ready audience for your zealous views about Zion, for your longing aspirations, for the welfare of your ambitious dreams. When did I ever flout them? I have ever regarded with respect the sincere convictions and the conscientious endeavors of every man, whatsoever his creed, his color, or his nation. No conduct of mine in your affairs can gainsay that."

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He drew his chair still closer to Steinberg and did not hesitate in his speech when he noted the lines and shades of growing anger upon the face before him.

"And Rebecca's case is one that I have a right —at least I shall claim the right—to speak my mind about it.

"She is my daughter," cried Steinberg, scowling fiercely. He was on the point of rising to order the intruder from the house, or, if that were unavailing, to leave the four walls of the room to Ruhlman's oration about his rights.

"And she is, according to the technicalities of the law, subject to you in many things. But," and Ruhlman's voice rose with vehemence, "there is no law that permits you to tyrannize over her conscience. Her food and clothing may be regulated by you; her share in these domestic comforts and in your wealth is dependent upon you. But she is a grown woman, she knows her mind, she has her freedom of will. These you can not try to rule with terrorizing threats. I do not," he waited till the long-drawn whine from Steinberg's closed mouth had ceased, "I do not argue for the grounds of her new convictions—her reasons for her intellectual choice are not any business of mine. But I know that she is sincere in them, that she has spent her intelligence upon them, and I respect her position, just as I have always shown respect for your views and en-

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deavors. I am a Jew, Steinberg, a Jew by birth. If I have changed ground and do not stand where you stand, that does not prevent me from asserting truthfully that I respect you, howsoever I now differ from you in religious belief. And the same I say with regard to Rebecca. If she, in clear mind and will, as I think she has, resolved to become a Christian, then I am here to say that you must allow her to follow her convictions."

A wild explosion of a Yiddish exclamation broke from the old man's lips. He rose and beat his hands at the air, and ran claw-like fingers through his hair. He wheeled dizzily backward as he continued his frantic exclamations and fell against the wall, wailing with his face in his hands.

The show of distraught grief did not intimidate Rebecca's dignified champion. He moved toward the door, saying in a gentle and calm tone, "I'll call Rebecca, and let her speak."

Steinberg reeled forward. His ashen look of hate and anger changed to one of intense horror. He staggered toward Ruhlman, and with a cry flung himself at his feet. "Pity me, pity me; do not kill an old man," he cried between Yiddish moans. "I'll die of shame before my people, before our people, if Rebecca goes that cursed way."

Ruhlman coolly turned toward the door and

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called Rebecca. With a louder voice he called again; and within a minute she stood at the entrance to the room, her deep, rich eyes filled with the beauty that weeks of patient pain had given them. Her delicate features had likewise an added beauty, though a tinge of sorrow gave her cheeks a slight pallor. She looked inquiringly into the room toward her father, who had risen and was standing by a window with averted face.

"I hope my poor father has not been suffering more on my account," she said very sweetly.

"I do not mean to be cruel, Rebecca," Ruhlman spoke in measured words. "But I say that his suffering is self-willed. I had acquainted him with my knowledge of recent happenings in this house, and I hope I have explained my position for the attitude I take."

Rebecca had entered the room and went to stand near her father.

"He will force me to appear obnoxious with my meddling. But Rebecca, we are living in a day when religious prejudices ought to be swept out upon the four winds."

"I do not wish to increase my poor father's distress," she said, as she turned her eyes of love toward him.

Steinberg was unable to interpret the real meaning of the statement; for a moment the lifting of his heavy eyelids suggested that he imagined Rebecca to be hinting at a withdrawal

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from her Christian avowals. Ruhlman, too, for a moment looked surprised.

"But surely," she began again, and her voice while subdued was firm in its gentle sweetness, "father must know after all these years that I am not moved by whims, that I do not set my resolutions according to fickle flashes of fancy, and that I still love him as my own dear father, even if I remain firm in my desire to become a Christian."

She drew toward her father, but he made a forbidding gesture. Then, as his frame shook with violent emotion, he raised his open palms toward the ceiling, crying out from the depths of his heart in sounds that were inarticulate. His hands fell and beat upon his forehead as he went wailing from the room.

Rebecca threw herself into a chair, and with her hands and face upon a table began to sob aloud. Ruhlman stepped quietly to her side and placed his hand gently upon her shoulder. He was speaking soothing words, as his hand stroked her rich, black hair. Gradually he won her from the tears and bade her stand up and be a brave little girl.

"This will pass, Rebecca, dear," he whispered. "Let the sun shine again, as it will. And when the clouds return," his tone was solemn, but not frightening, "the clouds will return, but you will be brave. I am not speaking as one who con-

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gratulates you on your religious convictions. They are yours, not mine; they are your sacred resolutions. There is the explanation of my present conduct."

They were come to the hallway. Mr. Ruhlman would gladly have waited longer to speak of Marie and the plans he had made for her travels in Europe; but his presence with the girl might be to the father an occasion of deeper annoyance and wilder grief.

"I have but a few words to add," he said as they went down the stairs. "Your father can refuse to keep you in his house; he can cut you off from a share in his large fortune; he may order you to decide between your present resolve and his further support. Do as you will; take time, all of it that you wish. And," he spoke with assuring solicitude, as he felt Rebecca tremble at his side, "if the cruel issue comes to pass, if you must leave the house and take your father's lasting enmity, I want you to let me know. I will be here."

He took her hand firmly in his as he stood at the door, trying to make his benign eyes win a confiding smile from Rebecca. "Little Christian maidens have a way of being patient and heroic," he said. "You have probably read about the Catacombs."

Mr. Ruhlman walked down the pathway. He felt sure that though a gloom equal to that of

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underground labyrinths might pervade the Steinberg house, Rebecca would not be subjected to the whip or to the angry execrations of her father.

III

Ten days later Rebecca contrived to send a note to Mr. Ruhlman. She felt that he was anxious to hear from her, she said. There were little shadows occasionally, but she had grown accustomed to them. She would endeavor to the very last to win her father's indulgence. Impossible, thought Ruhlman. And the only pain she felt was that for her father's wild grief and suffering.

Every morning, before he went down to his business-table and books, he stopped outside her door and called her name with heart-breaking pitifulness. Had she returned to her mind? he would ask; was she going out upon the cold world alone, out among the savage dogs?

Her only answer was, "Father, my dear father, you know that I love you and do not want to be driven from you."

But now, the note continued, he must be drawing near to some determined action. Last night he had packed up a few of Rebecca's clothes into a trunk, and then dragged the trunk toward the back door of the house.

Mr. Ruhlman did not answer the letter immediately. He had given his advice to Rebecca, and he did not want to torment the old man with fur-

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ther intrusions; Rebecca would know where to turn in her hour of need.

Three weeks later, in the dark of a lonely night, she came to him, a ghastly whiteness on her face, but not a tear in her eyes. Her hands were firm, as she stood for a minute before him in the warm hallway; then, overcome by the strain of the last half-hour, she dropped in a swoon at his feet.

A church-bell sounded the hour of ten; a fierce wind was blowing rain and sleet across the earth —a terrible hour to drive even a dog from the fire. Hannah had sped out when she noticed Rebecca gone from the house. Hannah took time to say things that were not Christian blessings to the cruel father. And rushing across the storm-swept lawn and through the hedges, she reached Ruhlman's house just as he had lifted Rebecca and placed her on a couch near the fire.

"Sure I wondered what that old Turk of a man was doing," she whispered to Ruhlman, after they had bathed Rebecca's temples and chafed her arms. "I thought it queer enough the way he was taking the poor child in and out of the rooms, and up and down stairs, and speaking in a funny kind of a moaning voice. That's why I kept a little near to watch; and when I had my back turned for a minute in the kitchen, Rebecca was gone."

It was not till the morning, after the refreshing

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slumber of the night, that Rebecca gave her narration of the event. After breakfast, which Hannah served in her room, she went down to Mr. Ruhlman's study to tell the story.

"My father came last night and took me by the hand, and led me into all of the rooms of the house, calling me affectionately by the names I had heard in childhood, pointing to pictures that were dear to us, and to the various little ornaments and household relics that were there. Surely we loved them, he kept saying; surely Rebecca's heart is fast about them. Then his eyes and hands swept toward all the wealth of the house, and reverently toward the religious signs and mementos. I had nothing to say but my little words of endearment, while my arm held his fast. Then when we came to a cold hallway near the back door he drew from his breast some bankbooks, and opened the pages before my eyes. He dropped my arm and stepped aside in the shivering cold of the passageway. In a most inviting manner, poor, dear old father," she put her face forward into her hands, "he held up the bank accounts, and with his other hand motioning toward all the rooms of the house, he asked me if I would choose these, have all that he possessed for my own, or keep to my foolish notions. I did not speak, I could not. 'Answer,' he said sharply; 'Answer once and for all.' The chilling air kept me from reeling in the exciting emotions.

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The long months of my thoughts and sincere resolves lit the darkness where I stood. 'Father, you know I would die to serve you,' I said, 'but I am a Christian, I have first to serve Christ.' And I went toward my father with outstretched arms."

Rebecca bent forward, and though she wiped her eyes, she was not sobbing, nor hesitating in her speech.

"He went to the door," she continued, "and opened it. Then he dragged my trunk from a corner and pushed it out upon the steps. 'Go,' he hissed at me. 'Go forever.' I did not run for my hat or cloak. I turned and thought to fall down and kiss my father's feet before I should go. But he moved into a warm, brilliant room and closed the door upon me."

She stood up with a brave smile.

"Hannah can see to the trunk?" asked Mr. Ruhlman, as he glanced out to see if she heard his question.

"I saw it last night there before me as I leaped out the door, and I pulled it into the box-house," she said, as she came forward. "And I'll get an expressman to bring it, and not a soul of them over there will know where it is going. I suppose the night is the best time to send after it so they'll not be the wiser where it's going."

Mr. Ruhlman went over the new problem with Rebecca. There were several courses of action

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which they might take. Of course, Rebecca could find welcome hospitality in his house. Hannah could remain to work there. But, after all things were considered, perhaps this was best, said he: that Rebecca should take rooms in town with Hannah and engage in some honorable employment. Mr. Ruhlman would find places for them —a store or an office where Rebecca could obtain work for the present, and Hannah could be company in the evenings. In that way there would be no unnecessary surmises from the meddling gossip of third parties. Rebecca would prove that she had accepted the cost of her sacrifice. Her father might be brought to relent and send her his pardon.

"See where Harry Crawford's story has landed us," Ruhlman said to himself later in the day, when he was going to his office.

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CHAPTER XI

MARIE AT D'ANTERS

I

FROM Marie along the roadways in Europe frequent letters came, full of the interesting wonderment which the great panorama gave to her. If there was a childlike delight over what appeared to be glimpses of fairyland, Marie found a deeper pleasure in the historical associations that hung about old palaces, older abbeys, and those monuments erected to commemorate some important national event.

Her party had landed at Queenstown to make a brief detour in Ireland and England. Marie was mindful of a simple request from Hannah, and she found an opportunity to look in with cordial salutations at the neat white cottage where Hannah had formerly lived. It was back among the high hills at Glengariff. Marie and her companion were amply rewarded for the long, winding climb they made from the hotel. Before them lay the magic beauty of the bay, with its islands and bold headlands. Hannah's uncle was naming a hundred points of interest: there, below them, was the land of the once-princely O'Sullivan Bearg; there—see in the cleft of the woods—

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that was the ruins of a bridge built for the army of Cromwell, as he came down with flames of his curses and the butchering sword. And out there "beyant," out on the shining waters—once a French fleet appeared there and tried to land. And the old man, as he turned to invite the young ladies to "a morsel of refreshments agin their long journey," sang a stanza out of an old ballad:

"Oh! the French are on the sea,
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
Oh! the French are in the Bay,
They'll be here without delay,
And the Orange will decay,
Says the Shan Van Vocht."

And when the two girls applauded and begged him to sing the rest of the ballad, he told them that the verses were as long as from there to Bantry Bay; but he would sing another stanza, "a stave," he called it, "and sure, Hannah has the rest of it, and a hundred other songs like it." And they came down the hill while the wooded cliffs re-echoed the clear voice, singing:

"And what color will they wear?
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
What color should be seen
Where our fathers' homes have been,
But their own immortal Green?
Says the Shan Van Vocht."

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All the details of this visit were narrated in glowing words in a letter to Hannah. Other descriptions of events in the Irish sojourn went to Mr. Ruhlman—a word about every magic vista, a sad lament over the countless marks of centuries of oppression, the ruined abbeys, the desolate sites of once crowded schools and universities, and "the sad little Treaty Stone on the banks of the Shannon, 'a lasting reproach to perfidious Albion,' said a splendid-looking gentleman to us while we were at Aubrey de Vere's estate in Adare."

A long letter came to Harry Crawford from London. Marie, after her earnest inquiries about his book, was led to mention what seemed to her a relevant observation in England. She did not attempt to describe scenes that he had often looked upon. But "this was a little line of thought" that was forced upon her in England when she considered the contention of his argument about Jerusalem.

Was the Jewish position more ridiculous than the Anglican religion? Who were the stiff-necks, after all? If the Jews held doggedly to their blind denials about the Messiah, were not the Anglicans keeping their eyes shut to facts of history and sentimentally glorying in their security? Is it the ostrich, her letter asked, that hides its head in the sand and imagines that it has eluded its pursuers? The Anglican could not

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hide that way from the scrutiny of historical criticism. They held piously to their imaginary claims about being Catholic and Apostolic. But had they not, only a few centuries before, cut from those claims? And now they were a withered branch, a piece of flotsam floating on a perilous sea. The old abbeys and the cathedrals, why glory in them? Their olden Faith was gone; the walls were not entirely razed to the ground like those in Jerusalem, but the Holy of Holies was not there. Yes, indeed, the Anglican position was of a piece with the Jewish one: it differed in degree, not in kind.

Marie offered to make a brief apology for having drawn Harry aside to her "preachy paragraph." Lady McCornish might take umbrage at this view of the national church. "But you see," Marie added, "I have been to school; and during these long winter nights in our hotels I go rambling in the books which I manage to find here."

When she came to Paris her heart and eyes ran wild with innocent delight at the magnificence of a hundred vistas. What was that feeling within her which gave her an intimate appreciation of these scenes? There were merry little children, in the care of the white-capped *bonnes,* playing on the lawns near the Louvre, and again on the grassy plots along the Champs Elysées. Was it the memory of Sœur Julie's stories that

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filled her heart now almost to ecstasy and prompted her to run in among the children and disport like one herself? Her feet were ready to scamper across the Place de la Concorde, out to the Bois de Boulogne, out to Issy, to see Sœur Julie's friends, out to Claireville to play with Maxwell in the towers of the Chateau d'Anters.

But there was ample time ahead for all these childlike fancies to be realized. For the present she had to go with her party to their school on Avenue Victor Hugo. Marie should first write letters to her French friends; then a chaperone would be at her disposal. So spake the sedate directress of the school, where Marie was to abide till she went to Sœur Julie's friends at Issy. Madame d'Anters, however, would wait for no chaperone. Let the word be heralded abroad that Marie Ruhlman was in town. Madame la Marquise in a coach-and-four, or a princely looking automobile would speed directly to the charming little American. Out through the Porte de Versailles, along the crooked, cobbled streets of Issy, over the old coachroad, past Clamart, on to Claireville, they two would talk about Harry Crawford's story.

II

It seemed like an April morning, this mild forenoon in February, when Marie was taken out to the Chateau d'Anters. It had all the

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youthful freshness of an April morning, though the gardens along the road wore no verdure of the springtime. Daffodils and hyacinths had yet a month of sleep to take. But the evergreen trees stood in plenteous abundance behind the fences and among the pleasant uplands, and showed their dewy crystals like jewels in the sparkling sunlight. Along the marge of the sky were tiny transparent clouds, delicate red and green; and above the turquoise sky into the solid blue other clouds hung in colossal masses, some like great, snow-covered mountains, some carved and faced like gigantic castles among gray battlements and moats of dark, wide waters.

Marie had already spent a joyous week at her new home in Issy, having fallen in love with Sœur Julie's aunt, and obtaining her playful request to be the dear old lady's niece forever and a day.

The house had a high wall about it, and a long, shapely garden down to a grove of fir-trees. From the upper windows Marie could look out upon the grassy mounds of a military fortification; and on the Paris side she could see indistinctly the great areas of houses, and at night the myriad lights and the flashing gleams of the revolving lamp on the Eiffel Tower.

Already she knew the way to the quaint little church on the hillside, where she could attend Mass daily; and over on another street was a con-

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vent of Dominican nuns, whose chapel was open to the public for Benediction every afternoon at five o'clock. At the foot of the hill among great gardens, where distinguished churchmen were held in memory, was the spacious seminary of the Sulpicians; and farther back on other property, and in its own setting of pretty woodlands, was another seminary where young men in plain black costumes were preparing for the foreign missions.

Marie had the American privilege of going out upon her walks without a chaperone. "Our French girls," Sœur Julie's aunt explained, "never go down the street alone; but Americans, ah, well, that is your custom, and you must enjoy it, Marie." And with a little laugh, "You could not be bothered waiting for a slow body like me."

"I am quite willing when in Rome to do as the Romans," Marie answered in her ready French.

"Dispensations are Roman, too," the aunt replied, her old eyes laughing, and her lips continuing her set of French phrases, "Ah, well; so much the better; isn't it so?"

And by the end of the first week Marie was almost as intimate as a native with the turns of the streets, the byways, the *place de l'église,* and the peaceful cloister of the convent. The children in the square began to bow to her; *M. le*

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Curé, the venerable old parish priest with the halo of white hair, saluted her with a blessing; and the postman, *Jean le facteur,* waited to give letters to her as she came down the steps of the church.

It was all a week of paradise. Then came the welcome initiation to the Chateau d'Anters.

Had Marie seen it for the first time from a passing train-window doubtless she would have considered the Chateau no better, architecturally and in its landscape, than a hundred other villas along the road. The countryside exhibited many specimens of gorgeous houses, most of them in the renaissance manner, set symmetrically in square gardens. The Chateau d'Anters seemed to be patched in every conceivable style of architecture—Greek pediments, and Roman arches, and Gothic windows in the various façades; projecting ells that flashed in the sun, and behind them, in the deep, angular recesses, parallel lines of shadow; one tower that claimed to be a Norman type, and another like the round, ivy-clad towers in Ireland; a huge parallelogram in glass, with a slanting room, and a colossal oak-tree growing through it; and entering to all this architectural hodgepodge was a deep, wide Colonial porch, such as you might observe on the manors in Virginia.

Marie, however, was not in an enchanted mood in the hopes of finding a scenic splendor; nor

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had she to be disillusioned when the odd towers and pokey dormer-windows looked over the wall into her radiant eyes. All the way over the road from Issy, Maxwell was reciting his stories about the adventures worthy of Arabian Nights which he had enjoyed during the winter. His little arm was about Marie's, as if she had been his playmate as far back as he could remember—which would hardly have been more than five years. He asked the coachman to drive slowly, when they were passing places to point at, and then to drive quickly when he began to speak about his squirrels and all the wonders in the great glass-house.

"Mother has half of the west tower ready for Harry Crawford," he said when the pointed top of the tower stood out like a cone floating in the air. "Do you know him?" he asked in his treble-voiced exultation.

Marie smiled upon her interesting cicerone, and answered, "He likes Maxwell d'Anters."

"But I am sure," the lad was picturesquely solemn, "that he likes Marie most of all."

"A poor fortune-teller I am afraid you are," said Marie, with a pretence of seriousness as she held out her hand to Maxwell to read.

"I go by letters," he replied, closing his little fingers over Marie's; "and by an old adage the nuns taught us—that where the heart is, there the thoughts are."

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"Who is this wiseacre a-talking?" asked Marie, looking at the sober shaking of his head.

"And that is why he mentions you so often when he writes to me," was the only answer.

Marie laughed and tried to find a suitable rejoinder; but the coach was at the gateway, and her eyes caught sight of figures standing on the porch, beyond the trees.

Ward d'Anters, who had been at the porter's lodge with the old tapestry-weaver, came forward, and entered the carriage, kissing Marie's hand, as he said, "We are so delighted to see you."

The two boys descended when the carriage reached the porch, and stood like little pages attending Marie; then, on either side of her, their hands in hers, they went up to Madame, waiting in profuse happiness for her long-expected guest.

"How did we ever allow you to be on this continent so long, so dreadfully long, and not find you out?" The dear Madame had embraced Marie, and kissed her cold cheeks and pressed her hands a dozen times before she led her to the Marquis, and then into the great warm hallway.

"I have been telling Marie's fortune," Maxwell broke cheerily in on the talk.

"You ought to have a long bookful on that subject now," answered the mother.

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Maxwell would have continued his tuneful talk—was he unconsciously helping to weave a net about two possible lovers?—but the party went off to inspect the house. Ward, who was a book lover and had by heart a thousand scenes from his readings, was not so sure that any princess he had met in books was as beautiful as Marie. Whether she stood amid the chequered spaces in the glass-house or by a balustrade near a piece of statuary, or bent forward to look through a narrow tower-window, she was fairer than a picture come to life in some painting, or from an old romance. And Ward knew where there were beautiful faces in illustrated editions of Shakespeare and in old legends about King Arthur's court; and he knew many classic descriptions in prose and poetry.

The Marquis, recalling that Marie's uncle was a curio collector, exhibited his studio of tonsorial articles, well stocked by now with various specimens—pumaceous stones, which, said he, were Babylonian; and Roman strigils, and shears from Jerusalem; Louise Quatorze razors, and even Indian tomahawks. He made play of his exhibition, and in his merry laughter he remarked with pleasant irony, "After all, the national museums are quite as foolish."

Madame did not for a moment assume the formal airs which in other years used to dazzle and amuse the thronging parties at the Chateau. She

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went on in her talk with natural grace, and with an enlivening interest which the years had acquired for her. She could illustrate her reminiscent remarks with allusions to countless distinguished personages, and with accounts of elaborate programs "here in this house." But it was all done in a refined maner, no braggadocio, no flashy colors from a giant brush. Her tones were delicate enough for a convent parlor; her conversation was worthy of a salon with Madame de Sevigne and the sweet Eugenie de Guerin listening: but above all, she had a true motherly heart. Ward and Maxwell were witnesses to that precious possession; Marie Ruhlman came quickly to share in it.

Yet the candor of Madame did not allow her to hide from Marie the pompous ways of earlier years in the celebrations at d'Anters. As the pleasant hours sped on, and her heart was more firmly encircling Marie's, she approached the laughing history of former days. "You know how idolatrous Americans can be before titled personages," she was explaining the motive that inspired the week-end play at nobility. "They pretend to be somebodies when they get a little wealth. They really do sell their daughters at auction-blocks when peerage bids. Well, it was healthy fun to dazzle them out here. But, oh!" and Madame's pleasure beamed in her kindly face, "it was tiresome play at times, even if really

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laughable; but doubtless it kept us in abundant health of body and mind."

And later that night, when Madame had shown the playful coat-of-arms, explaining the odd significance of the cobra-de-capello and the pheasants, she told Marie that she might expect to see "some of these globe-trotters and interesting characters before the end. For," said Madame, "I am arranging to bring an end to the social history of the Chateau d'Anters. I hope to take the children to America in the summer, and perhaps we shall buy a country-place there."

"Near Boston?" queried the listening Maxwell.

"We shall see," replied the mother, with the deep light of her eyes beaming on Marie.

"And you said, Mother" (it was a joy for the lad not to address her as Madame la Marquise, nor to be called Monsieur le Vicomte), "you remember you said that we were to have a great blaze of glory yet at d'Anters, a stream of glorious light that should illumine all the road to Paris," whereupon they all applauded the little speaker, "and in June or August, some time before we go, we shall have a gorgeous *fête champêtre,* and invite all the village, and maybe the nuns will come from the convent." His eyes were dancing merrily after this speech.

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"My dear," said the mother, with a playful lifting of her eyes, "what if it rained?"

Ward bethought him of a passage in a fairy story. "Cinderella's coach! Cinderella's coach!" he ejaculated; "it will carry us into the castle." And when the others clapped their hands at his solution of the problem about the possible rain, he added, "Or we can climb the ladder of Jack's gigantic beanstalk and reach the sun above the clouds."

Madame proceeded to unfold "some little plans," when she found an opportunity during the digressive frolicsomeness of the two boys. "There is *Mardi Gras,* which you will think a circus let loose on the streets," she began to count the various spectacular events which were to entertain the young American. "That is number one. And number two, let me see."

And while she was reflecting, Maxwell stepped forward, touched his hand to his forehead, as a military salute, and said, *"Mi-Carême."*

"That is too pagan," replied the mother, pretending to be in a serious debate with her soldier son. Maxwell had remained in his military pose.

"Mid-Lent," she turned toward Marie, "is a day when worldly Paris—it is worldly every day —turns out again upon the streets as at *Mardi Gras,* and tries to make merry. They elect a queen of laundresses, and parade. Their revels are not laughable, their gayety is only a poor,

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painted show—poor, worldly Paris, with its tired heart, its sick soul; the laughter is not hearty, the smile is a-weary of the husks of pleasure. No, dear," she reached her hand toward the soldier boy and drew him to her arms, "we shall keep this Lent as best we can. We have so much, your father and I, to be thankful for, that we ought to try to show our gratitude by keeping a strict Lent this year at d'Anters."

This was not preached in a pietistic tone. It was said simply and with unaffected sincerity. The others received it in a kindred spirit.

Just as Madame would have begun to enumerate the next in the list of pleasurable futurities a pistol-shot rang out upon the silent night air, and a riotous sound as of smashing glass followed. The little group, all save the Marquis, were immediately on their feet. Marie looked in amazement at the faces, and was more bewildered as she detected no alarm, but a trace of merriment on the three countenances. Maxwell held her hand tightly and seemed alert with anticipation.

Suddenly a great sonorous voice shouted through a window, "Ahoy, my hearties! Port helm."

"It's the Pirate!" shouted the boys, running toward a side door.

Madame led Marie out, and even the Marquis

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got up and followed, saying, "Well, well, well, the Pirate!"

"Shiver my timbers, lads!" Marie heard the same great voice. "Like a landlubber I must have smashed the scuppers."

"Come aboard!" shouted Maxwell.

"Aye, aye, mate!" echoed Ward.

And Marie saw a stalwart, elderly man step forward from the dark and stand in the light of the little hallway. His face was handsome in the clean, hardy lines, his skin with a tan like dull bronze; a red handkerchief was bound around his brow and tousled hair, and his coat, an odd sight of white pockets and thick, glossy lining, was turned inside out.

"Abaft!" he called in a great hearty laugh, and lifted Maxwell into his arms.

III

Though it was "perilously late," in the Madame's phrase, "and time for children to be in dreamland," Ward and Maxwell were conceded an extra hour in a world awake while the Pirate was regaling his audience with stories of his exploits. It was a play-hour that might be passed over unrecorded did it not serve to illustrate a round of similar events which Marie was to enjoy at the Chateau.

"The Pirate, my dear," Madame got a chance to explain after the reception, "is a retired sea

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captain, one of the old school, hale and hearty, as you noticed. He travels a great deal still, but of late years he loves to hug the shore, as he puts it; and he spends whole weeks on house-boats along the Rhine and on little sailing craft of the lakes. He manages to drift in here to spend a few days with us once or twice every year, and he presents himself in the way you witnessed, though to-night he must have missed his step and tumbled over a glass case, 'the scuppers' he alluded to. The pistol for his mimic salute is kept at the porter's lodge. You'll see the fun that comes next—a pirate expedition in the yard for the children's pleasure."

"Why lie at anchor here, my lads!" exclaimed the Pirate, after one of his stories about a hunt long ago in Madagascar. "It's a dark night, yet glorious sailing weather, and the bays are loaded with good treasure. Weigh anchor and set the starboard watch. Have you taken your bearings, Mate?" He looked solemnly at Maxwell.

"Aye, aye, Cap'n," was the equally solemn reply.

"This means that he has brought some presents for the children, and we must go sailing about the yard to where they are hidden," Madame whispered to Marie.

Ward had run off to fetch a few electric flashlights. The Pirate unfolded a newspaper, and pretending that it was a chart, he spread it out

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upon a table. "Dim the cabin lights," he ordered.

Maxwell pressed a button, and the party were in darkness. The two lads tried to create a thievish air by small hissing noises and moaning deep in their throats.

"Here, sou' by sou'west," he flashed one of the little lamps, and lay his pointing finger on a wrinkled corner of the paper, "here lies booty that a Count may keep. Here," again the flash, and all the faces looked spectral in the surrounding darkness, "here under the shadow of a sycamore on the noon-hour lies a pack of knick-knacks for a Viscount. And here," his palms rubbed a fold of the paper, "under these woods to the north of the Fiji Islands, is what others may have if they take the trouble to look. Forth, my hearties." And a parade started toward the door.

Maxwell and Ward grasped some golf-sticks from the corner of the hall and put them as cutlasses in the hands of the Pirate's crew.

"Mind how the good ship rocks," said the Pirate, staggering at the door. "Now, my lads, to the boats, and keep close to the captain."

The little lamps kept flashing, as the brigands went along a pathway in the garden. The Pirate scrutinized his compass, and when he reached a huge, vine-clad bowlder under a rough Norwegian pine-tree, he sighted booty for the Count.

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It was a package of books, whose titles Ward immediately labored to discern by the inconstant light of his lamp.

Farther down the garden, when the sycamore "was sighted," the treasure for a Viscount was discovered—a quaint casket, which made Maxwell's eyes stare at the display of curiously carved pieces, some in ivory, others of silver, and a score of shining variegated shells.

The Fiji Islands in the fiction were the rocks near a grotto and spring. There, behind a sheltered angle, lay a square box; and its pasteboard cover being dramatically pried open by the Pirate, his mates being leeward in breathless expectation, the box revealed a variety of "plunder"—a pretty necklace of pearls for Milady, for which the Madame was truly thankful; and a long silver knife, "taken from a cannibal chief in the South Seas, used by him for shaving off good Christian heads before a festive barbecue." Whereupon the Marquis laughed outright, marveling that old Captain Maguire (alias the Pirate) had heard about the museum of tonsorial implements at d'Anters.

"There was word of the enterprise," confided the Pirate, "on the five seas. Why, strike me yellow, but this good carver will fetch many a look before a Louis Quatorze razor."

Anticipating that other guests would be at the Chateau, the Pirate had made provision for them

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with other trophies. These, with the unanimous accord of all the bystanding crew, went to Marie. A richly wrought collar of fur, one side pure ermine white and the other a brownish-black, was one of the articles. "In the manner of the ptarmigan," said the Pirate, "that has white feathers in winter and black in summer." And holding up a silver match-box with the letters "H. C." worked into a pretty monogram, the old rover of the seas made a handsome bow, and presented the box to Marie with, "And if it pleases your gracious Majesty, accept this for——"

Before he could finish his sentence Maxwell waved a golf-stick, which he pretended was a cutlass, and cried out, "For Harry Crawford." He had caught sight of the initials in the monogram. "H. C. is Harry Crawford, sure enough." His wide-opened eyes showed plainly that he was wondering how the Pirate came to hear of this friend—a question that was likewise in the minds of the others.

"Shiver my timbers," whispered the Pirate, making a revolving gesture, as if at the wheel of a boat, "you are beating to windward. H. C. is this: I have a son at a college in the States—Holy Cross is the name, due west from Boston fifteen leagues or less. I carve his college letters on such trifles as this. But," and he turned to Marie, "this gladly goes to seaman Harry Craw-

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ford. May he write a good log, and come home merrily on a lee tide."

The night was too dark to show the warm, pretty blush that sailed into port on Marie's cheeks, and the flash-lights, which shot like spectres down the path, as the group went "abaft" to the house, had not the skill to detect crimson.

"You may read Mate Harry's log some day," Madame was talking to the Pirate about the young author, when the party sat down before the fire to warm themselves after the marauding expedition. A valet had loaded a nearby table with refreshments.

Ward and Maxwell went away to bed with the promise of a night of stories to follow. "Swing tight in the shrouds, my hearties," called out the Pirate to his departing mates, "and say a prayer to bless these landlubbers here below."

Marie, who had enjoyed this specimen of a play-hour at d'Anters, and after a further hour of the Pirate's fascinating narratives, went away to her rooms, and dreamed of magic fairylands, everywhere the ecstatic wonderment of children —castles and fields for the tourney; richly caparisoned palfreys with fair ladies in the escort of shining knights; long, wide champaigns, with little groves and waving grasses, and a convent under the hill; the clash of arms between great

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Roman legions and the wild, famished defendants of a beleaguered city, from which a young maiden ran crying, ran to a ship which put out to sea, and it came safely to port, the first mate coming ashore with the beautiful log which he had written, and a Jewish girl reading it.

What wonder that when Marie came from Mass in the morning, and then partook of a light breakfast, she went to her room and wrote to Harry Crawford and asked for news of Rebecca Steinberg.

IV

Mr. Ruhlman had not acquainted Marie with the sad turn of events at the Steinberg house. A suggestion came to his mind at first to tell Marie so that she might send a consoling letter to Rebecca; but, upon second thought, he deemed it better to keep from her the knowledge of Rebecca's expulsion from her father's house. Marie should have freedom from distressful tales during her few months abroad. The time would come soon enough when she, with the revelation of a letter dazzling her thoughts, should need the full support of her staunch character. Let the sunlight, radiant and invigorating, now pour down upon her from cloudless skies.

Moreover, Rebecca was situated beyond the pale of alarming anxiety. Though deprived of the lavish comforts of her father's spacious man-

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sion, she was readily contented with the cosy little rooms where she and Hannah went to dwell. Rebecca found employment as a librarian in one of the branch libraries of the city; and though her pay was small, and Hannah's was not much greater, Rebecca did not dread a wolf of hunger at the door. Mr. Ruhlman, who had a purse ready to come to their assistance at any time, made some little contributions to their welfare. Prudence, he felt, should keep him from doing more for the future. People might talk; his money might be blamed with having made Rebecca a rebel from her generous father; a hundred other insinuations might be whispered abroad. But he would stand ready to help; and perhaps, thought he, Marie would arrange for Rebecca and the faithful servant next summer.

Accordingly, Marie was now left to the enjoyment of her great holiday. Sœur Julie's aunt was remarkably kind; the house, near the fort of Issy, overlooked Paris and the mundane beauty thereof, and had a home's loving atmosphere. Madame and the Marquis, who were just as hospitable when they were Mr. and Mrs. Ben Harrington in town, seemed to have no other business than their solicitous concern for the charming visitor. They were proud of her, and never more so than when listening to Marie's singing, while Maxwell stood like a page by her side. Marie was beautiful and intelligent, with

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a surpassing charm of manner, a refinement that was pure gold by night and day, whether in the presence of grandees or addressing the poor baker's daughter on the street. She needed not the pose of hauteur to lend her dignity; she did not affect wisdom, for she had drunk deep of Pierian springs, and yet she was wise enough to know her limitations; she did not borrow unmeaning smiles, for her heart dwelt by pure streams of laughter. To whom could such a seraph voice belong but one who had the constant inspiration as well as the artistic power to sing? Yes, Madame was proud, indeed, to have the privilege of such a guest when those staring, angular English ladies were present.

Many an American visitor studies the Louvre, Les Invalides, and the Sainte Chapelle; rides out to the Bois, strolls along the Seine, rambles around the Luxembourg, with its overdose of secular pictures and hideous display of the Impressionists; visits the Pantheon and must think that St. Genevieve's picture is out of place upon these atheistic walls; shops on Avenue de la Paix, hears the great masterpieces at the gorgeous Opera, knows where a banking-house is on the Boulevard des Italiens; and on Sundays attends the High Mass at the Madeleine, and Vespers in some little abbey or convent church. Marie went over the well-trodden course. Madame's magic word was a wand before other places worth know-

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ing; salons where Marie might converse with old ladies who had been in the court of Empress Eugenie; *ateliers* where artists were at work upon their moulds for bronze or stone statuaries. Here, for instance, was the original cast of that bas-relief which Marie had often noticed in front of the State House in Boston; there were the picturesque dens of literary men, one of whom, when Marie was introduced to him, "a member of the Academy, one of the Forty Immortals," laughed at "his idle title, a bagatelle in these times," and asked Marie if she could recall Mercier's epitaph.

"Which Mercier?" readily asked the Madame.

"He died, let me see—yes, just a hundred years ago. He wrote a rejoinder to Piron's epitaph. I wish it were mine."

"Piron?" queried Madame, as if she ought to recognize any name.

"Alexis Piron—died in 1670," replied the writer. "His epitaph read:

'Ci-gît Piron, qui ne fut rien,
Pas même académicien.'"

"And Mercier's?" Madame's interrogation seemed so natural.

"'Ci-gît Mercier, qui fut académicien,
Et qui cependant ne fut rien.'"

With innumerable anecdotes such as this

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Marie filled her little notebooks as the days of excursions came and went. Being versed as a convent girl in botany and ornithology, she was a profound instructress for Maxwell when the two, like happy playmates, went rambling through the fields and woods of Claireville, or down the long parterres around Versailles. Prettier than flowers and birds was the play of their merry voices and the innocence that went with them.

"What if Harry Crawford should come and make his book here!" was a frequent commentary from the little lad.

"He is coming soon," said she, to change Maxwell's tune on this string.

Harry did not reach Paris on the morning of *Mardi Gras,* much as Madame hoped he would. The party that drove out from d'Anters in the spacious touring-car was in high spirits at the prospect of seeing Paris in its gay carnival. Marie had been with the family to an early Mass at the convent, where she remained nearly an hour to converse with all her loving nuns—many of them former companions to Sœur Julie. Toward noon the Marquis marshalled the family aboard the car, and took them to the *Continental* for lunch. The car was sent to the garage, so that the family might stroll leisurely along through the boulevards and watch the quaint processions and the merry antics of the carnival

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players. Hawkers with their wares, confetti for the most part, and rolls of colored paper ribbons, were multiplied at every corner. Pantomimic artists were performing wherever a sheltered place allowed them. In the squares, dances were going on, to the music of oddly organized bands. Children cast handfuls of confetti at every passer-by, and coats and hats were thick with the colored flakes. Streams of brilliant paper ribbons fell from the balconies, were interlaced with the trees, spread across from window to window, crossed and recrossed, till every boulevard seemed bound in a gigantic web. Up and down the streets went merry faces; even a stolid gendarme smiled when Maxwell covered his folded arms with confetti. On and on went the great-out-of-door play, till the declining sun and fatigue sent the d'Anters group home to dinner.

"No message from Harry Crawford," was Madame's first remark in the house. "He has missed the excitement; he might have got a suggestion for his story."

The chauffeur had been sent to the school on Avenue Victor Hugo for two girls whom Marie knew. Madame had invited them to dinner, and would chaperone them during the evening when they went abroad for another hour of *Mardi Gras*. Madame had thought of looking at the Bal Masque in the opera house, but she decided

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not to tarnish the sweet eyes of these young girls with the revelry of that mundane scene.

Ward and Maxwell were given their playroom for the hour, while the others were gone. Mr. and Mrs. Ben Harrington with one of the girls walked ahead; Marie followed with Helen Sibley, the other girl from the school.

The group came to a halt near the Madeleine. They stood to view the wonderful play of lights from a thousand colored lamps. The wide *Place* seemed streaked in myriad ribbons of light as if to make a stage for "La Loie Fuller" in her enchanting dances. As the Harrington spectators started to move onward a semicircle of short-skirted actresses swept upon the scene and began performing a ballet, and around them flocked scores of French students, such they appeared to be, from the Latin Quarter. The ballet immediately fell into attempts at other dances, some waltzing and others curvetting in the frenzied convolutions of modern dances.

Madame, who knew that such carousals were tame to Parisians, was shocked to see that this one had occurred on her course, before her young protegées had enjoyed an hour with innocent play. She turned to leave the scene, hoping to reach a farther part of the Avenue. But the walks were thronged; she could not move beyond the curb.

As Marie stood timidly conversing with her

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companion, waiting for a chance to go forward with the others, she noticed a group of the students draw toward the curb. They had found no partners among the ballet dancers. They sidled over, and Marie flushed as one of them jumped to the curb and called to his companions, "*Voici!* Here are two pretty English demoiselles."

Madame overheard the French youth, and turned to be assured that the remark referred to any of her party before she reached out, heedless of onlookers, to box the young man's ear.

Evidently the other French students had their eyes on the young girls, and joining hands, they were closing in the form of a circle, intending, perhaps, in their bacchanalian kind of sport, to jostle the girls from the sidewalk and surround them.

Before the maneuver succeeded, a stentorian voice called out, "Avast, my hearties!" The old Pirate, who had just come to the other side of the street, caught sight of the Madame and Marquis; pushing aside the French lads, he jumped to the crowded sidewalk and greeted his friends. Madame's reception to her children's playmate was worthy of her salon at the Chateau; her greetings and jovial voice, while she presented the Pirate to the girls, attracted the attention of the surrounding throng, and even from across

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the street curious eyes glanced to scrutinize the merry group.

But the young Frenchmen, though their semi-circle was broken by the old Pirate, were not routed; quickly detecting that Madame was off her guard as chaperone, they returned to their pranks. They must act with lightning rapidity or Madame's eye would soon turn their way. They did not notice that, on the opposite curb stood a young man of their own age, but of a physical bearing equal to three or four of theirs combined. He was scanning the faces up and down the crowded street. He was on tip-toe as the group of French students swung forward toward Marie. One of them reached a place near Marie and put his forefinger to her chin, with a French phrase. The stranger, with a tiger's spring, shot across the street and cracked a blow of his clenched fist on the Frenchman's jaw. Down went the French flirt to the ground; and one of his comrades who rushed to his assistance was picked up bodily and flung out to the confetti-covered street.

"Bravo!" cried a dozen voices.

"Harry Crawford!" exclaimed Madame, as she turned and saw him lift Marie's hand to his lips. "We thought you had missed the *Mardi Gras.*"

"I just this minute came from Gare St. Lazare." He was not breathing heavily after his

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recent exertion, but his eye followed the French students as they slunk away. "I should have gone down to your house if I had not looked up as I was crossing the street here and noticed your party."

"And you should have found Maxwell there." Marie's voice was tuneful with gladness.

An hour later Harry met the jubilant Maxwell. The Pirate, too, went home with the party, and *Mardi Gras,* so they agreed unanimously, was much pleasanter indoors.

The Pirate started a parade around the dining-room, and he began to whistle "Yankee Doodle." As he caught sight of Maxwell sitting on Harry Crawford's shoulder, he carried the tune into words, singing,

"Harry Crawford came to town,
Maxwell on his shoulder."

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CHAPTER XII

THE LETTER DISAPPEARS

I

THE ceremony of the mourning for the dead is very ancient among the Jews, and their scriptural proof for it goes back to Genesis, where it is written that "Jacob rent his clothes, and mourned for his son many days." In many parts of the modern Jewish world, owing to the social exigencies in certain localities and the spirit of the times, many variations are to be found in the ancient ritual. But Jews of the strict orthodox type carry into effect, as far as they can, all the minutiæ of the mourning ceremonies.

Old Steinberg was of this class. He would be faithful to the prescriptions of *Shivoc*—the seven days of mourning after a burial, and to *Shyloshim,* which lasted thirty days. Rebecca was dead—dead to the Steinberg family. The funeral ceremony should follow. Rebecca was dead.

Mr. Ruhlman, in a talk with Harry Crawford shortly after the daughter was driven from the house, hinted at the proceedings which were likely to follow. Harry appeared incredulous; human nature, thought he, would not suffer such a course

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of action. Religious differences might separate members of a family—that he could understand; but he was reluctant to believe that a man of human flesh and blood would force his imagination by means of religious ceremonies to feel that his own daughter was dead. This, he said emphatically, was doing violent outrage to the laws of life.

"Rebecca is worse than dead to him," Ruhlman was explaining. "Some years ago I knew an old Hebrew in Brussels. He was living with his two nephews whom he had adopted; for his own children had all been converted to Christianity, and after being married, they had settled in different parts of Europe. To the old Jew they were virtually dead; nothing could induce him to forgive them or express a wish to see them. Their names were not to be mentioned in the house. He died cursing them as apostates to their faith; his last words were regrets that they had ever been born." Ruhlman glanced at Harry's wide-opened eyes, and added, "This is true. I know one of these sons now in Berlin."

"The old man will doubtless summon his son Samuel from New York," he was saying a few minutes later. "The relatives take part in the elaborate mourning; even some of his Boston friends may visit his house and lament with him."

He went to a bookcase, and returning to the fireside said, with a quiet smile, as he handed a

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book to Harry, "This will help you, if you wish to write anything about a Jewish funeral in your story."

Harry had already perused a similar book, and now he did nothing more than run his eye rapidly down the pages, glancing at the various rules so minutely prescribed—those for the rending of garments; for the lamp which was to burn seven days and nights without being extinguished; the prayers for the dead, the most important one being the *Kaddish;* and how when friends came to console the afflicted family, they should always say on departing, "May the Omnipotent comfort you, with all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem."

Samuel Steinberg, as Mr. Ruhlman intimated to Harry Crawford, did return to his father's house. He was slow in answering the letter, for his father's summons had to go to New York and then back to Steiny's den in Boston. The old man was far from surmising that his son, the beacon of his hopes about Zion, was married to a cabaret girl—the very one to whom Jack McSweeny alluded to last winter, the girl who had once been a Catholic in South Boston, who would probably have remained one, if her mother, obsessed by a mad ambition to get into society, had not taught her daughter to become fascinated with *decolleté* and the sensual delights in modern dances.

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Steiny, at the marriage, registered as Ernest Kaufman. Lucille Murfie did not have to disguise her name. Her mother was dead; moreover, "her dear mother did so love the name Lucille." How "the girls" would envy her the new name—Kaufman, Lucille Kaufman—"how smart it sounded, Lucille Murfie Kaufman." And her husband was "the most authoritative exponent of the Socialistic doctrines, especially those about marriage and free love." Lucille was perfectly happy. Ernest was so generous with money; and then, what was the marriage bond, after all, but a trifling thing, manufactured before a city magistrate. It could be annulled at any time. What did good Socialists care! If "love" grew cold, Lucille and Ernest were free to seek new mates. Had not Ernest proclaimed that eloquently over and over again! Had he not proved the right to do this from great authorities in Socialism!

Ernest Kaufman and Lucille Murfie went their married way, and Jack McSweeny was beside himself with joy. He had tightened his grip on Steiny; he had but to lift his finger and Steiny should writhe in agony before him. Let the young Socialist, the great orator of the smoky dens, the money-spending "Sheeny" of the cabaret halls, "let him, I say," said Jack, "dare to refuse to come across with money when I speak, and I'll squeal to his old man."

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Jack was disappointed in his unrealized ambitions about Rebecca. But he could chide Steiny for the failure; "fate and fortune were dead against him on the first few tries," he said, "but faint heart ne'er wins," he added sardonically. He could wait, and enjoy the flashy present, and help to direct Steiny, and hope to win his own dear Rebecca. Every cloud, thought Jack, has a silver lining. See the silver shining brighter now, as Steiny announced that he was summoned home by his father.

"Is it bad news?" instantly asked Jack.

They went out on the street to talk about it. Lucille was not to know about the religious trouble at the Steinberg house. "What was the use of putting her wise," said Jack to himself. He was full of precautions, Jack was. He was afraid that Lucille might come to know Steiny's real name; she might take it into her head, later, to make trouble. Eight or nine lines of blackmail from Lucille's pen would revolutionize the present condition of things in the McSweeny-Kaufman camp. Lucille Murfie Kaufman was cleverly kept from the knowledge of any of Steiny's troubles by his devoted friend and adviser, Jack McSweeny.

"It's about Rebecca; am I right, Sam?" Jack asked immediately after his other question.

They were walking down an alley which ran

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from Dowtell Street, where Ernest and Lucille lived.

Steiny was moody. He scented trouble from the letter. "I guess it's about her," he replied doggedly.

"Well, be a loving brother," Jack tried to banter; "be a loving son and cheer up the old man."

Steiny did not answer. His nose hung down over a disgusted mouth.

"And say, Steiny, that big Harvard bluff, that Harry Crawford, is quits there at last. I hope you'll be able to say the right word for yours truly now."

Steiny's sullen countenance lengthened in lines of disgust. "That ain't bothering me just now," answered Steiny in a low, guttural drawl. "See here!" He drew his father's letter from his pocket. "I know you can't read this Yiddish writing." He tossed his fingers across the paper. "Look at the cursed news. He says Rebecca is dead. Do you know what that means, Jack? She is dead to him, he means; that's what he means." He shook his head with a savage accent in an oath.

Jack appeared to be sorry, or rather he tried to spread a veneer of grief upon his bloated face. In his heart he was hoping that this death of Rebecca implied that he would find it easy to win her hand in marriage.

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"Too bad, Steiny, too bad." His words had the hollow ring of insincerity. "Is that Crawford responsible?" Jack knew that something about religion was the cause of the disturbance in the Steinberg house, but Steiny had never told him precisely the condition of the case. It was beyond Jack to surmise that Harry Crawford, the football star, had gone upon a religious mission to old Steinberg. "He has some sneaking scheme to marry Rebecca and get the old man's wealth," was Jack's way of explaining the situation, since the day Harry threw him from the veranda.

"Harry Crawford! Harry Crawford! You have him on the brain," Steiny answered with an effort at reproach. "I tell you the old man says Rebecca is dead. And Harry Crawford—well, he's in strong with Ruhlman; and you made a good big bluff that you were going to get Marie for my wife."

Jack for a moment was going to turn on Steiny and lift that threatening finger. But quickly he decided to apply honey instead of vinegar to Steiny's wounds. "Well, she's not gone yet," Jack answered, with a slap on his companion's shoulder. "She's off at her school." Neither Jack nor Steiny knew that Marie was in Europe. "She'll be back from school; cheer up, Steiny. And didn't I get you that dear Lucille for wife? Do you mean to say that it was

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not my sweetest words that gave her to you? You know that, Steiny; you know how she loves you because I told her what a wonderful fellow you are." And then, simpering with a long-drawn smile, he said, "It's fine gratitude you show for the charming little wife I got you."

"You were all right, Jack, all right." Steiny was a bit more cheerful in his words. "And I'll not forget the way you fixed the marriage up." He took Jack's arm and whispered his confidences, as they moved among the crowds at Copley Square. "But it is about Lucille now that I am down in the dumps."

"How is that?" interrogated the other, completely surprised at the mention of her name.

"Why, it's this way," Steiny explained as they went on. "I know just what is likely to take place when I go home. The old man is fierce when he gets mad. And I suppose that he is going to have a funeral over this affair of Rebecca."

Jack felt like saying that he would be pleased to drive the hearse, and rescue Rebecca from the grave. But this was no time for cheap facetiousness. It would pay to listen, to follow the funeral cortege, and watch where Rebecca went.

"There will be mourning, a long month of mourning," Steiny whispered frantically.

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"Think of it, I shall have to cut my clothes, and take off my shoes, and say the *Kaddish*. Seven days of gloom, and then a month more of it."

"Well, what's hard about that?" asked Jack. "You'll be down here occasionally, won't you? I can see to our affairs while you are away."

He meant by "our affairs" an interest they had in a new cabaret restaurant which was recently opened in Chinatown. Jack and Steiny had invested some money in it.

"No; I wouldn't dare to leave the house. The old man will be furious if I don't go through the whole performance." Steiny was almost in a fit of rage. "If I should slip out of the house during all that time, the old man would lock the door forever on me and curse me."

"That's tough luck for you and dear Lucille," Jack offered by way of sympathy.

"That's what I'm thinking all this time," answered Steiny. "What'll she be saying, hey, Mac? What will she be thinking?"

"I can easily fix that up; I will explain to her that your business took you out of town." Jack used soothing tones, which counted generally when Steiny was in distress.

"Say, Mac, I have it!" The disconsolate look left Steiny's face; he almost shouted the words. And then, back again with his throaty, whispering tone, he said, "I can tell Lucille to come out to the house, and perhaps find a place

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as a servant." He appeared delighted with his proposal. His little wife would be with him in his own home.

But Jack had a sharper eye and quicker logic. He divined consequences that would be fatal to him if such a course were pursued. "Do you want to queer us?" he had a touch of bitterness in his sharp utterances of the monosyllables. "Does Lucille know who you are, you sheep-head? If she gets wise, couldn't she start things humming? And where would you be, and where would your good friend Jack McSweeny be, when they clapped you into jail?"

That was refutation enough.

"No, I'll fix this matter up. While you are away," he laughed and pointed toward Brookline, "away out there, out of the world, I'll give the old duffers down at the Social Hall a good string of talk. I'll tell them that you are busy on a tour for our kind of Socialism. I'll say that New York and Chicago are wild about you. See, Steiny." He pinched his companion's arm. "See how the prices for your speeches will be doubled when you return? And about Lucille, why, that's easier still. I'll give her a similar game—that you are away on a tour for the cause, and that she herself will see the great cities later. I'll get her to take an interest in our Chinatown cabaret, get her to manage it. Say, what do you think of your true friend, Steiny?"

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"Pretty good thinking, Jack," he replied slowly.

A half-hour later their programme was complete in all its details. They had stepped into a little hotel, and during the refreshments Steiny wrote an explanatory letter to his wife.

When they came out, a cold, drizzling rain was falling. Steiny started briskly for a subway entrance on Boylston Street. They stood for a few moments in the shelter of a doorway.

"Don't come out till after eight or ten days, Jack," whispered the other. "Ship my trunk as soon as you get Lucille down to the cabaret."

"There's Rebecca, there's Rebecca," whispered Jack excitedly, as he caught sight of some passengers in an automobile.

Steiny's eyes almost popped out of their sockets as he saw Mr. Ruhlman's car ride past. Rebecca and Hannah were in it.

"They've left the house," he spoke with commotion. "Follow them, Jack."

Jack hailed a taxicab, but the Ruhlman car was far out of sight by the time he gave the direction to the chauffeur.

Steiny descended the subway stairs, not knowing that his sister had been expelled from the house four days ago, and that now she was on her way to the rooms which Mr. Ruhlman had arranged for her and the servant.

He boarded the crowded train and went home to his long, black month of mourning.

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II

It was indeed a long, dreary month through which Samuel Steinberg dragged his jaded sighs and useless longings. The Jewish hell has, among its horrors, weeping and gnashing of teeth and impenetrable darkness. Steiny, according to his calculation, must have spent a century in the deepest dungeons of that hell. His mouth had a burning thirst for some of the luscious liquids at the cabaret; his eyes were bulging out for a glimpse of the colored lights in town, for an hour again at a Socialist meeting, for a smile from Lucille. His ears were deaf after the long wailings of his father, they yearned for the sensual, intoxicating effect of an orchestra with modern society music. But Steiny had to abide in the house of mourning, listening to the long prayers, and repeating them; he had to be content with the black, silent rooms, when the prayers were ended, and to continue to dwell patiently with his show of grief in the terrible sepulchre of his father's house.

Rebecca was dead and gone. Speak her name no more; the old man trembled, his eyes shot forth daggers of hate, his face was white with rage, as he gave this command to his son at the conclusion of the prayers.

Still the somber silence continued through the days, and Steiny had to endure it. His head

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seemed ready to crack with the sharp ache; his whole being wilted and drooped. The sun, when it occasionally shot a glance into the room through a narrow rift in the curtains, seemed blood-red. The moon looked like a frozen, ghastly face, reeling past the dizzy stars. The chill, dark air smelled of the tomb; every room was filled with cavernous shadows; and from the corners and niches unearthly voices appeared to sound, and white skeleton faces with hollow eyes and sunken cheeks flitted around with haunting laughter. What new phase of hell was this? asked Steiny of his quaking heart. He felt like running out and rushing away to quiet his feverish senses among the pleasant noises where his friends were.

But he was taught to be patient by one forceful lesson. One day he ventured to suggest that he be allowed to return to New York to complete his studies. His father swept around and fixed his glaring eyes upon him. The son was quick to jump to his feet and run with a placating air to the old man.

"I proposed that, father," he said, bringing ready tears, "only because I thought you wanted me to grow up a leader for Zion. I will stay here with you and comfort you, now that—" he did not finish the sentence, for Rebecca's name was not to be mentioned, and he had almost said, "now that Rebecca is gone."

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"No, no, my son!" the old man threw a heart-breaking pathos into his Yiddish words; "no more of the dangers from our enemies. They have done their worst. But you remain, you are safe here, Samuel, you have kept true." And the old man sobbed aloud and threw his arms about the boy.

Later that night he began to unfold his plan. He brought forth a book which described the rabbinical schools in Russia—the same book which Mr. Ruhlman had glanced at, on his last visit nearly two months ago. He read to him about the celebrated *Yeshibah* of Volosin, about the seminaries at Wilna and Warsaw, and about the *maskalim* of Zhitomir. Late into the night the readings continued, till Steiny's aching head and blinding eyes could hold out no longer to the recital. "To the devil with the ancient settlements in Kieff," he muttered to himself.

"You shall go and see them," said the father with a growing enthusiasm. "You shall go and study there where our brethren are, and not remain here in a land of bondage and increasing peril."

He hinted to his son that one of their present dangers came from Mr. Ruhlman. Some of their business lay in his control. Old Steinberg would attend to his finances before that unorthodox Jew could strike a blow.

Steiny was bewildered at his father's talk. His

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head felt like lead; thought would not pass in or out of it. He longed in vain for Jack McSweeny to come with clever advice, and tell him how to proceed with this move.

"And then I will go there," said the old man, his face lighted up, as if he caught a vision of a promised land. "I will come when I have seen to my affairs. When I have all our money gathered in, I will come."

He went prattling on, explaining the details of the proposed programme. Happiness lay ahead of them in Russia, and larger opportunities to make a fortune in Zion's cause. The Russian persecutions should not affect them, for the Steinbergs would be wise and register as American citizens, and make themselves known to the American Consul.

The following day and steadily through the entire week the old man swept his son along in the current of his enthusiasm. Steiny was compelled to float on in the middle of the ever-increasing stream; in vain did he cast his weary eyes toward circean shores where music of the cabaret was sounding, and gay lights were flashing.

"You will build up a name there before I come, Samuel," the doting talk kept running on. "But we shall not remain there; we will hope to spend our last days in Jerusalem. The most merciful King, in whose hand is the soul of every

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living thing, and the breath of all flesh, will rescue us from the *Chibut Hakeber.*"

He was alluding to a punishment known as *Chibut Hakeber,* which Jews might suffer if they were not interred in the Holy Land. In the old man's hands at the time was a prayer to escape that punishment: "When thou liest down thou shalt not be afraid, yea, thou shalt lie down and thy sleep shall be sweet. Oh, keep us from the *Chibut Hakeber,* and from the worms and vermin in the grave."

Steiny felt himself on the verge of insanity. When he managed to escape from his father's chatter he locked himself in his room, and paced up and down the floor as if he were in a madman's cell. The deathlike gloom seared his eyes and clogged his ears. His skin felt hot as if with leprosy; his hands trembled and creaked like a vine that was being dashed about by the winter wind. The walls of the room seemed to be closing in on him; they threatened to grasp him like a vise and crush him into pulp. He shut his eyes, held up his hands to stay the ceiling from falling; and after standing with frenzied feelings for a few moments, he collapsed and, frothing at the mouth, fell heavily on the floor.

When he awoke from the long faint he looked about for something to solace his wild imagination. Should he unlock the door and rush out to the streets, run like an escaped lunatic from this

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horrible nightmare? He quivered as he thought of the consequences. One rash action on his part and his fate was sealed. Break from his father's torturing schemes and he should be left a pauper on the streets. Jack McSweeny would desert him; Lucille would turn in scorn from him; the Socialists of his group would turn him out and curse at his discovered hypocrisy.

No, he must be patient and endure this inferno. The black night had to end soon. Jack McSweeny would devise some scheme to rescue him. Steiny could not go near the telephone without arousing suspicion; he dare not write a letter to his pals. The old man scrutinized everything that went in and out of the house. The flesh-pots of Egypt should not bring in their destroying temptations.

Steiny resolved to support the misery for another day, for two days; surely before another week ended, before April came, relief would blow in. He kept his eyes from the depressing appearance of his narrow chamber. He clutched a book, with a hope to be distracted. He knew the book well; he had heard it read and praised by a young New York Jew one day on the steps of the Columbia library. It was the "Songs of the Ghetto," by Morris Rosenfeld.

Steiny opened the pages; his eyes fell first on the German text, recalling an explanation which he had heard in a lecture at Columbia—that

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Rosenfeld's language belonged to the Lithuanian variety of Judeo-German, and that the Slavic and Hebrew words were spelled phonetically. But Steiny was in no mood for literary observations. He turned his eye to the English translation on the opposite page. He was attracted by the title of one of the poems, "Misery and I."

He drew the page close and began to read:

"Ho! Ho! Who is trying to force my door? Who comes there to disturb my peace? Misery? I hear her, I am sure of it! Away, you old witch! What are you looking for, by the curse of God?"

Steiny paused for a moment. Was this young poet a modern New Yorker, writing out of an experience such as Samuel Steinberg was now encountering? He read the next stanza:

"You have tortured me long enough, and almost severed my body from my soul, and robbed me of my courage, trampled upon my pride, forced me to beg for bread! Now go, where a thousand devils are burning. Avant, you slattern, turn away from me your black face."

"If Rosenfeld had my misery, he should write more." He turned the page. There was more.

"Away from me with your lies, disseminator of death and graves! Away! I am not your

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only one; a thousand pale weepers know you! Begone! Many know you; you are no rarity—not to speak of those who write in Yiddish."

Steiny flung the book down in disgust, without reading the remainder of the despairing lamentation. The lack of any consoling remedy for a Jew's grief was evident; Rosenfeld should not add to Steiny's mountain of pain. He unlocked his door and went down to see if he could prevail upon his father to send him at once to the school in Europe.

The old man was reading a letter, and seemed pleased with its contents. "A letter for you, my son," he handed it to Steiny, and waited to have it read and explained.

Steiny recognized at once the scrawling hand of Jack McSweeny; and fearful lest some indiscreet remarks lay in the writing, and that the father's clucking and smiling were but the harbinger of a storm, Steiny prepared to meet a thunderbolt of wrath. To his surprise he learned that Jack had played a clever game. The letter was a pious fraud to hoodwink the father and convey one or two bits of news to Steiny, and it was signed "Ivan Sweenski."

"A friend of mine from New York," the letter said, "tells me that you are missed over there by the Zionists. They hope you will soon return; the synagogue is to have a meeting and arrange

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for the great Congress of Zion's people. Try to attend it, dear Samuel.

"I hear that Crawford has gone away on a long trip. He was a disturber, and we are glad to have him out of the way. I hope that you have good news of Rebecca." (The last two words of the sentence had been crossed out by the old man. Rebecca's name must not be mentioned even in writing.) "The little Christian girl, *Lukille,* whom you converted to Zion's cause, is very well and much pleased with her work. Thursday night I am going out to see Ernest Kaufman."

Steiny found it easy to construct, for his father's edification, a bit of biography to cover Ivan Sweenski. Ivan was a diligent student in Boston, a friend of some of Samuel's friends at Columbia, and a person who was anxious to help the cause of Zion by day and night.

Steiny here looked up, but with a futile hope that his father would send him out that very night to confer with the lovable, philanthropic Sweenski.

Through the ordeal of the next few days Steiny pulled himself, and on Thursday evening he kept a sharp lookout for Jack McSweeny. By several little maneuvers he managed to go out upon the porches of the house, sometimes with a book in his hand, as if he was studying the leafless vines and hedges; and then bringing in a twig

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from one of the bushes, he would pretend to study it seriously, a pencil pressed thoughtfully against his brow. He never went beyond the nearest shrubbery, lest he should arouse suspicion.

His long confinement during the period of mourning and the days that followed had afforded him ample opportunities to discover where some of his father's money lay concealed. From one of these hiding-holes he had extracted a thick layer of bills, each of them worth fifty dollars; and during his little pretence at botanical study he managed to fold the money in a skin-pouch, and conceal it among the roots of the shrubbery. Steiny wanted to be ready for any necessity when Jack McSweeny should come to visit him. Certainly there must be some crisis in their world of Socialism, or Jack would not venture to come out and hazard their future.

About eight o'clock Steiny, from the darkness of the front room, saw the figure of a man turn in at the side gateway. He could discern a large bag hanging from the man's shoulder, and, for a moment, he thought that the visitor was one of the innumerable rag-gatherers whom his father employed in town. The wish was father to his second thought; and when he reconnoitered to see that his father was thoroughly engrossed with books in the library, Steiny, with a large pruning-knife (as if he were working still at his

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botanical studies), slipped noiselessly out by the side door and met Jack McSweeny.

"Pretty clever, Jack," he whispered.

"I was ready," he pointed to his rag-bag, "to meet the old gent."

"Quick! What's the news? I am fit for a lunatic asylum."

"Don't quit, Steiny, till we get things ready for a sure blow."

"A sure blow?" Steiny came nearer. "What's the game, Jack? Quick. I must get away in a minute or the old man will pounce on us."

Jack held the bag forward. "See that? Are you wise?"

The young Jew shook his head for a negative reply.

"Well, I saw that man Ruhlman leave town to-day; he had a long ticket; he's gone some distance. What's to keep us from going over to his house to make a haul with this rag-bag. I was in there once. I remember an exit at the rear of the house. What do you say? Are you with me?"

"What about Lucille?" Steiny wanted to ask the question sooner, but Jack had swept on with his proposal.

"Wait a moment till I run into the house. I've got to play safe." Steiny broke a few twigs from the shrub and stepped into the house. After depositing them on a table, and then mak-

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ing a clatter with some knives and pans, he passed the library door and glided out again to Jack.

With hurried whisperings they planned their "sure blow." Steiny advised Jack to wait till the following Monday. On that day his father would be gone for a few hours to his warehouse in town. By that time Steiny should have a chance to make a full swoop of the old man's hidden moneys. Then, with what they were to get in Ruhlman's house, they could live on Easy Street for many years.

"That's Socialism," Jack spoke exultingly. "We get a chance to share the wealth of the millionaires."

"Ruhlman is a Jew," said Steiny. "He will have put his valuables under lock and key. But I know a thing or two about the inside there." He pointed to his father's house. "Yes, and there is good money right under our feet." Steiny was getting brave. He stooped to the earth and dug out the pouch which he had concealed.

"You're a brick, Steiny. I always said so."

"That's a start." Steiny flicked his thumb over the bills.

He bade Jack wait till he made another visit to the house.

"What's that?" he asked, when he returned and saw an envelope in Jack's hands.

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"All about the little wife, and our affairs in town. I wrote it out, thinking that I might not get a chance to speak with you. I felt that I could get it to you some way, if your rich father wanted to drive a poor old rag-gatherer from his door." Jack's dirty face cracked with a smile.

"Say, you're all right, Jack. You're a thinker, you are." Steiny reached for the letter.

"No need to read it. I'll give you the contents in five minutes—the whole story."

A curtain shot up in one of the library windows, and the father stood peering out into the darkness.

"Give me the letter, quick," Steiny whispered with a husky voice. "Slip away, Jack. Next Monday at four." He pulled forth two of the fifty-dollar bills and gave them to his faithful friend.

The young student of botany went quickly into the house. He had a magnifying reading-glass and a microscope in his hand. He sat down calmly at the library table and began to examine diligently the dormant buds and shoots. One specimen of buckthorn bore dry, withered leaves hanging from it, and a cocoon of some larval insect clinging to one of the leaves. Steiny consulted the book. "This is probably a piece of *Zizyphus spina-Christi*," he said, with a nonchalant air in his researches. And he lifted up the twig of Christ-thorn buckthorn, and with his

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book and microscope went up to his room to pursue his study. He asked his father to call him for the night-prayers, when the loving sire and his faithful son would read the *Shema,* repeating the nineteen prayers before it and the two after it. With what unction they would say, "Happy are they who dwell in Thy house, continually praising Thee. Selah!"

Steiny dropped the botanical pose like a red-hot coal when he reached his room. Jack's letter told him that the cabaret was succeeding gloriously, and Lucille was a popular directress. In the promise which the financial success of the cabaret gave them, Jack proposed to open "one of those swell inns in the springtime, one of those nice little cozy houses along the roads in the country, where automobile parties come with plenty of money, smart society people with the clink of gold. Hey, Steiny? You don't know, do you, that all kinds of money may be gathered in—gambling, the roulette wheels, and other things? There are many of these millionaire places along the roads, and we may as well fix one up and pull in the ducats. You'll see some swell society posers, and Lucille is dying to have charge of the place."

There were a few remarks about the condition of things among their friends, the Socialists—all the world wondering when Ernest Kaufman was

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to reappear in his oratorical splendor. What throngs would stand about his soap-box next summer on the Boston Common!

A little bell rang, and a sad, lonely voice called, "Samuel."

Steiny went down to his Hebrew night-prayers.

III

The raid on Mr. Ruhlman's house seemed at first a rank failure. True to Steiny's surmise, Ruhlman, like a careful Jew, had left no treasure lying loose about the rooms. Articles of great worth were upon the mantels and tables; but it was wise for a housebreaker to leave these untouched. They could be traced to Honolulu, and the brigands be ferreted out and lodged in jail. But they found one document that was worth a mint of money, so Jack imagined, when in the light of his room, an hour later, he was reading the astounding revelation contained in the letter —"Private—For Marie Ruhlman." Though he had come upon none of Ruhlman's gold, this letter would find money enough in due time.

Steiny was not fully prepared to disappear with Jack that afternoon.

"The old gent has been too cautious," he was explaining to Jack, who stood in the disguise of a peddler at the back door of the Steinberg

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house. "He's gone into town, and when he finishes at the warehouse I think he is going to buy my tickets for Europe. The old duffer thinks that I am going to study in Warsaw among the Russian Jews."

"Well, take the tickets and everything else you can. They may be redeemed. You are nifty enough to get away from the boat by slipping down one of the side gangways."

"Look at that," Steiny held up a blank check. "I know the old man's hand, and it will be easy pie to fill that out for a couple of thousand."

"A couple?" asked Jack, pretending scorn. "Make it five at least."

They were walking down the pathway on the way to Ruhlman's house. Jack was to go ahead and proceed to the back door near the garage. He had been over the ground before—the morning after his drunken visit to the house. Steiny was to go to the front door, and if a servant answered the bell, he was to inquire about some books belonging to his father. Jack's inquiry for rags would discover if there were any servants in the rear of the house.

There were none, either to answer his knocking or the bell which Steiny was ringing. The coast was clear.

Steiny continued to ring the bell, and remained on the porch to give a signal if any were needed,

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and then engage the intruder till Jack should reappear with the bag. Jack went boldly in at the garage-door, turned to another door at the right, followed a passage through a shed and stood in the kitchen of the house. He soon found the main hallway. Some of the rooms were locked. Upstairs the rooms were wide open. He looked furtively about, ran to the tables and drawers; they were locked fast. He would come back to them later. First let him see what could he get without prying open these drawers. There were silver and gold ornaments on the mantels, but they were too massive. He pushed on. Here was Marie's room. He guessed at that from a photograph of Harry Crawford which stood on a bracket. Yes, it was her room; see the books with her name in them. Jack shot forward to the desk. The top was closed but not fastened down. He raised the cover. Not a ring, not a bracelet or a necklace on the rich, wine-red wood. Nothing but a neglected letter. Who wanted a girl's silly letter! Jack flung it back upon the desk. Wait a moment. It might contain a pretty little secret about Harry Crawford. It might give Steiny some fun.

"Ye gods and little fishes! Steiny! Lucille!" Jack almost cried aloud as his eye fell on the superscription, "Private—For Marie Ruhlman." He shot the letter into his pocket and buttoned his coat tight.

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The bell at the front door was giving a signal of approaching danger. Jack rushed away without inspecting any of the other rooms. He darted to the shed, turned into the garage, picked up his stuffed bag, and with a laboring stride went down the street.

Steiny delayed at the front door till Jack reached the side entrance of his father's house. Walking leisurely up to where his pal stood, Steiny said in a low whisper, "A false alarm, Jack; I thought a wagon which stopped out in the street was coming in. Any luck?"

"Hadn't time," answered Jack. "I got a love-letter, or something like one, belonging to Marie. I'll let you see it soon if it's worth anything."

"Better be getting away. The old man will be returning in a few minutes. He's regular as a good clock."

"All right, pal." Jack shouldered the big bag. "But push ahead with your gold-bricks as soon as you can. We want to get started on a swell wayside inn for next summer."

"Sounds fine," Steiny replied, with a sneer which did not offend the hearer. "But suppose I am shipped across the ocean."

"Suppose nothing." Jack had managerial assurance in his tone. "Get all the money you can, take the tickets, too, and we'll see what's next." Then after a short pause he smiled grimly

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as he said, "If you want to suppose, suppose that we lock the old man in your stateroom and ship him across the ocean. That would make us masters here. Rebecca could come back, and we could then, as neighbors with equal rights, call at the Honorable Ruhlman's."

He did not wait to stuff Steiny's head with more wild suppositions. He drew tight his frayed surcingle, which was part of his peddler's disguise, and hobbled down the street, away to a room on Dover Street, where he doffed his ragged clothes, and hastened out for a long-needed shave.

That night the long, mysterious letter, which contained Ruhlman's confession to Marie, gave him a wild kind of delight. He could hardly restrain his desires to proceed at once to action. A line or two of blackmail would bring Ruhlman to his knees. How should a letter sound with these words? Jack had a pencil and wrote: "Sir: After the hideous way you forced my daughter from me, I, David Morton, demand that you send her back to me with ten thousand dollars, or I will bring down the law upon you and crush you under the howling obloquy of the world. Shylock and his pound of flesh shall be enacted again. I am fully prepared."

But Jack McSweeny was not fully prepared. He had the letter; he could afford to deliberate, and to aim an unerring blow.

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And how would this letter read to Marie: "Dearest Daughter: Your long-lost father, driven to the ends of the earth by a savage, money-making Jew, has returned. Ruhlman will tell you how he stole you from me, and how I have been forced to work like a slave." And Jack drew his pencil away as he wrote, "etc., etc."

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CHAPTER XIII

THE COURTYARD OF THE PRINCE DE CONDÉ

I

DURING the Lenten season Harry Crawford willingly accepted a penance, and tried to perform it with faithful exactitude. After the night of *Mardi Gras* and the following day with the Harringtons in Paris, he deemed it according to propriety to propose to go to England and work at his book in Lady McCornish's house in Burton Square. Madame la Marquise was entertaining Marie; Harry ought not to remain like a sighing lover.

His proposal met with a categorical rejection. "Mr. Ben Harrington," said the emphatic voice of Mrs. Susan Harrington, "how do you attend to your friends? Here is our young author, for whom we have waited so long, here is your guest, and he wants to get away to the dark, heavy air of England. What has Burton Square to inspire him with, but an old yew hedge, a drizzling fountain and a few sullen purple beeches? And yet you, Mr. Ben Harrington, Marquis d'Anters, will let Mr. Harry Crawford depart without offering him the Chateau at Claireville."

The company applauded the Madame's playful speech and the serious manner with which she

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delivered it. Marie and Maxwell called "Encore."

Madame did not wait for her husband's reply. The Marquis winked at Harry and "yielded the floor to the previous speaker."

"You shall do a penance during Lent," her expostulatory look and words were addressed to Harry. "You shall be imprisoned in a tower at Claireville, fed on paper and ink, allowed to ramble in the gardens, and receive one letter a week from Marie and Maxwell. We are going on a long pilgrimage. You shall have the Chateau to yourself. Be ready to show us the manuscript of a new book when we return!"

Harry betook himself to his abode of penance, while Madame led Marie and the children southward into France, visiting a shrine at Paray-le-Monial; thence by slow stages they went on to the Riviera, and later to the Holy Week exercises and Easter glories in Rome. The Marquis remained in Paris to perfect his preparations for the family's removal to America in June. During the week-ends he went out to Harry at the Chateau; but there were no gala days there during the penitential season. The well-known paper with the coat-of-arms of d'Anters fell out of sight. The cobra-de-capello was hidden in a scented escritoire; the English pheasants were dwelling securely among the rocks and shrubberies at the end of the garden.

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Harry labored at his undertaking with little interest in the cause of literature, and with many excursions of his fancy to the south of France and the sunny shores of the Mediterranean. He could see, in a bright aureole, Marie and Maxwell always playing amid palms near a beach or climbing the cliffs to apple-trees which were dwarfed and salted in the sea air. But Marie ought not to enter his literary endeavors so frequently, he thought; and a hundred times a day he had to force himself back to the environs of ancient Jerusalem. Rebecca stood forlorn by trampled gates.

Harry went over his argument a dozen times. It was conclusive; any man of reason should admit that. The power to prophesy, to utter a marvelous prophecy, which came true to the very letter—such a prophet must be from God. Christ, therefore, was from God. The Jews who rejected Christ in Bethlehem, at the Temple, on Calvary, must at least pause in sight of the Holy City, and must be convinced at the fulfilment of a prophecy. One person, intelligent, high-souled, fearless—such was Rebecca Steinberg in these latter days—would confess her convictions in the face of torture.

But was he to repeat all this till doomsday, Harry asked himself impatiently. Was he chained to a dungeon post? When was progress to set in?

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The advance came on a line where he was not expecting it. An illative process held him spellbound one quiet night in his writing. He had proved already that Christ was a divine ambassador, sent by God, with the full power of truth. Yet this same Christ proclaimed Himself to be the Son of God, and wrought stupendous miracles to prove His claims in the presence of undeceived multitudes. A person sent by God could not teach error, He could not deceive. God could not sanction a lie by allowing a deceiver to work miracles. Christ was God, as He claimed to be.

Harry Crawford ought not to have been surprised when he reached this point in his chain of reasoning. All Christians profess the divinity of Christ. "Do they?" asked Harry in a later hour of reflection.

"Are these so-called Christians, whom I know, men and women of my ways in religion—are they really convinced that Christ is God? Have they realized, *realized,*" he accented the word, "that, as I think I do now; Christ, God? I know that the Churches have a sentimental regard for the beautiful personality of Christ, for His tender and kind love of men; but do they hold that He is God?"

And so the writing of Harry's book was a task deferred. Had not Mr. Ruhlman hinted at such an issue last autumn when Harry outlined that

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incipient argument? Had not Mr. Ruhlman's foresight elicited this remark, "You will find that your argument will take you up a long road"?

By Eastertide Harry was far up the road. Step by step, past the authenticity and the genuineness and the veracity of those historical documents in the New Testament, past the fulfilment of the great prophecy, he proceeded, on to the realization that Christ is God; then the sequence came, namely, that His Church—the one unchanging, unchangeable Church is still existing, still visible and alive with vivifying life. For Christ said solemnly (Harry read the words), "And I say to thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Harry studied an exegesis of the text: There was the promise of a Church; and the gates of hell, the forces of evil opposition never could injure the Church builded upon the rock. Again Harry read: "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

Then he drifted back to thoughts of his story; he took up a pen, pulled a pad of paper toward him, and began to write a description of an imaginary road near Jerusalem. But Rebecca got in the way when he reached a turn near some olive trees; farther up the road he could discern Marie in a strange scene. It seemed to Harry like a picture by Raphael, wherein Christ is de-

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picted giving the keys to Peter. Harry waved his hand to dismiss the distraction, and continued to write about his road near Jerusalem.

The weeks moved along, and Harry had nothing but a few half-written pages to show for his long, dreary hours in the writing-room. Why had he been tempted to come to Europe before his book was written! What a laughing-stock he should soon be to an expectant multitude—all at d'Anters, Lady McCornish, the nuns in Washington and Nova Scotia, Rebecca, Marie, especially Marie; and then Mr. Ruhlman, and then the person who was waiting to translate the book into French. Here was a world waiting for a great literary masterpiece; Madame d'Anters had advertised the sure event.

Harry was, of course, at liberty to pack up his trunk and run off to England, or place the Atlantic Ocean between his acknowledged defeat and the shameful disappointment of d'Anters. He could go back and resume athletic relations with Holy Cross or find a position as assistant coach at Harvard. But he was able to flout so slight a temptation. There were reasons to keep him in Europe, to make him willingly linger at Claireville. Harry enumerated some of them; if the last one was Marie, it was not the least.

He read her merry letters over and over again; if one came in the morning, he made sure to read

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it again as soon as the lamps were lighted in his tower room. Here came one now from Rome. Marie had witnessed the wonderful ceremonies during Holy Week: Wednesday evening at St. John Lateran's, Thursday at St. Mary Major's, Good Friday at the Gesù in the morning, and in the evening at St. Peter's, and again on Saturday morning at St. John Lateran's.

"It was wonderful," almost all the paragraphs began with these words. "We saw some young Americans ordained to the priesthood on Holy Saturday morning; and other young men from all parts of the world were there in cassock and surplice."

Harry reread, "from all parts of the world."

"And St. Peter's is perfectly wonderful, dear Harry." (He liked the way she addressed him even in the middle of a paragraph.) "I do not wish to tire you with all this religious talk. But you must come some time. I was thinking of your story, and I said that even if the old temple in Jerusalem is flat with the ground, the Rock which Christ appointed is still standing on His great promise—under His other prophecy, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Rock on which His Church is builded. All languages of the world are here."

Farther in the letter she wrote (and Harry reflected on the significance of the statement), "I made my confession there in English."

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"Students from all parts of the world," mused Harry, "and all languages of the world are at home under the roof of St. Peter's."

"And on Easter morning," the letter went on, "we had the supreme privilege of attending the Holy Father's Mass in the Sistine Chapel. I can not begin to describe the glory of that wonderful hour, dear Harry. You doubtless have read of the artistic wonders of the Chapel. The music—think not that this is a girl's exaggeration—was celestial. And I can not relate to you what my feelings were when the Holy Father came in, carried aloft in his sedan. You have read about Pope Pius X." (Harry had never read a line about him.) "He is so loved, he has done so much with the Keys of the Church—every child in the Catholic world loves him, and every man, prince or peasant, respects him. Well, when he came to where Maxwell and I were standing he had descended from the sedan, and he put his hands forward for us to kiss them. Do you mind if I say, dear Harry, that it felt like heaven to be there, so near our Holy Father? And yet, heavenly as it seemed, I felt that I was at home in my little school in Nova Scotia, or in the convent at Washington, or again in the Carmelite chapel where we attended the Midnight Mass. It was here in Rome, but yet I was at home."

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Harry held out the letter, and then looked into his blazing fireplace. "There it is again," his reflections returned; "all the world at home in St. Peter's. Jerusalem is fallen; the Rock remains—all the world is one around its base."

A knock at his door roused him from his thoughts. The Marquis entered, holding a photograph in his hand.

"Do you know anything about this picture?" he asked, as he put it under the light. "I found it behind a vase in a hallway mantel. A servant informed me that she found it on the floor of Marie's room some time ago and neglected to report it. I thought you might know if it belongs to Marie."

Harry had never seen the picture before. He could not tell if it was Marie's property. It was the photograph which Mr. Ruhlman brought to the boat on the night when Marie sailed.

"It may be hers," the Marquis remarked, when they both had taken another look at the man's features. "Perhaps you will keep it till Marie returns. I might put it aside and forget all about it in this large house."

Harry fastened the photograph to a clasp on his desk. He would see it constantly and not neglect to mention it to Marie. He found written lightly in pencil on the back of the photograph, "for Marie."

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II

Mr. Ruhlman knew the great roads of travel in Europe quite as well as the streets of Boston and New York. He could tell what vista was ahead beyond the next turn of the train just as easily as if he were riding down Beacon Street or Fifth Avenue. Yet he enjoyed heartily the description of old familiar scenes from Marie's letters, delighting in her enthusiasm over the marvels of nature and of art which were found in rich abundance by the mountains and the sea, and in famous cities, from Paris to Rome.

He had looked upon the fertile fields of France. Marie gave him a new series of pictures which she saw from the train window: the long stretches of the champaigns, the great squares of gardens like gigantic checkerboards of landscape, and "near Lyons the fringes of one of the gardens were embroidered with white and pink arabesques of the fragrant spring blossoms."

"Has Uncle ever been among the Alps on a moonlight night? The villages at the base of the mountain looked like elfin plots, lighted only by tiny fireflies. The long streaks of shadow gave a look of famine to the faces of the mountains; and under the towering brows of white, the black caverns seemed to be hollow eyes of a primeval monster."

The sunrise in the morning merited a special

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letter. "You have seen it, I am sure, and you have experienced that sublime feeling when the golden shafts of the sun, shot through the deep defiles, fall triumphantly on snowy peaks. In the abyss below, the darkness of the night still reigns; even our apartment on the west side of the mountain, which is between us and the sun, is dark as midnight. But see the mountain tops to the west. For a few minutes they wear a purple pall; then, as the dawn reflects from them, they change to pink. The sun comes, and the gigantic cones of snow thrill with the crimson kisses. Warmer grow the cold altitudes, till a thousand red fires seem to cover the peaks; and as the sun mounts higher, the white rays fill all the valleys, and the red crimson die out, and the mountains are again under the cold white ashes of the snow."

On and on Mr. Ruhlman followed Marie. He was acquainted with the hotel in Turin to which the Madame's party went for breakfast. He knew well that high hill, covered with massive buildings, above the railroad station in Genoa. He had looked at those charming vistas of the Mediterranean, which everybody revels in, as the train runs along the rocky shore, darting in and out of tunnels, saluting the little hamlets nestled among the hills, and breathing the fragrant air from the sparkling sea. "The distant sails stood in numbers far out on the waters, like so many

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sea-birds resting and dreaming. And when the night drew on, and as we were in Holy Week, I thought that the sunset made the sea a softer and more somber tint, and gave it a Lenten purple to help our devotions."

Mr. Ruhlman forwarded many of these letters to Sœur Julie in Nova Scotia; and he read passages out of them to Rebecca and Hannah, when he called to see them.

Perhaps it was the youthful joyousness in Marie's letters which prompted him to think of sending Rebecca for a similar holiday in Europe. Though the brave girl bore up patiently with the strange condition of her life, she showed many indications of deep, silent grief. She had no anxiety about her food and lodging; even if her pay was meager, she could rely on Mr. Ruhlman for more than was necessary. And the buoyant talk of Hannah made the evenings pleasant, whether they remained at home with books or went out to a church.

But she had a loving daughter's heart for her father. She had pity for him, for the lone old man, who was her father. After his long years of struggle against poverty, after his lifetime of single-mindedness in Zion's cause, his planning by day and night with almost frantic aspirations to see Jerusalem restored—after all this, a bitter defeat, a broken heart in obstinate hate. This wore hard upon the loving thoughts of Rebecca.

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Her eyes lost some of their joyous luster; her face was paler, her lips began to show the drooping kiss of poignant grief. Mr. Ruhlman noticed the waning light of a countenance formerly so radiant with the sunshine of hope and innocence.

His alertness quickly devised a suggestion. In a note to Rebecca he said, "Marie will soon be returning to Paris, and by the month of June Madame d'Anters and her family will return with Marie to the United States. I want you to join them in Paris, have a few weeks at d'Anters, and be home with them over the ocean. The outing will give you a great deal of pleasure, I am sure. Hannah will be glad to go with you to see the holy hills of Ireland. There is where you will learn how people have suffered valiantly for the Faith which you now profess. And the persecutor is not a stubborn, tyrannical Hebrew, but self-satisfied, complacent England. Ireland, like a sweet, heroic girl whom I know, has been whipped from pillar to post for centuries by her godless mistress. But pardon the digression. I will call next week to speak with you and Hannah about going to Europe."

It was a beautiful evening early in May when Mr. Ruhlman paid the promised call. A soft breeze, rich with the blossoms of the Fenway, was wafted along the drive; the air from the river was clear as crystal, and seemed to sparkle in the light of the early stars. He felt that on such an

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evening Rebecca and Hannah would be gone for a walk—perhaps in the wide parkway on Commonwealth Avenue, perhaps in the Public Garden; and he glanced expectantly from his car.

When he reached the little house Hannah was there alone. A frightened look was on her face, her actions were nervous, as she quickly closed the door.

"Indeed, then, I am glad to see you, Mr. Ruhlman; I wish you had come sooner." Her voice was trembling.

"Rebecca is out, I see." He tried not to show astonishment or the apprehension of trouble.

"Only gone a minute ago, I think, for the ink of the little note she left is hardly dry."

Rebecca gone—a note—Hannah in agitation. Mr. Ruhlman still maintained his composure. "She is not troubled, I hope?"

Hannah was clearly distraught. Her eyes were twitching and her lips moving with fearful nervousness, as if words could not come fast enough. "Sure she has a burden of trouble, and I didn't know it till this minute. A torment of a man, dressed like a dandy, came here the other evening. I only got one look at him; I think I saw him before, one day when Mr. Crawford threw him over old Steinberg's fence on the porch. Well, he was telling her, it seems, that he was a great friend of her brother's, and that he was going to prevail on her father to forgive her

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and to let her have her own way in the house. And he made some queer story about Marie, that she was not your niece at all, but that he knew her father, David Morton is the name, I think." (Mr. Ruhlman heard this as if a mighty club had struck his head.) "And, says he, Marie's father would soon be calling to take her away with him—his stolen child, I think he said."

"What was the man's name—the man who told all this to Rebecca?" Mr. Ruhlman could remain seated no longer.

"Jack McSweeny. And see," Hannah rushed to a table, "see, his name is on this letter; it came by special delivery. God forbid me for having read it, but when I came in a while ago, and found her note, I couldn't help reading this letter to see what news it had."

Mr. Ruhlman took the liberty to run his eye over the scrawling pages; his hand trembled like one in a fever, and his face turned ashen. "Your father seems willing to forgive you," he read. "I write now to tell you that Samuel sails for Europe to-night, and your father will be broken-hearted. I will spend an hour at the house with them, and will be able to win your father over to you before Samuel goes. He seems pleased that I have managed to find you. David Morton will probably sail on the boat with Samuel, and be reunited again in Europe with his long-lost daughter. You very probably know her present

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address. Samuel is always wishing that you were going to Europe with him. Anyway, be sure to come out to your home at eight o'clock to-night and I shall have your father reconciled. Very sincerely, Jack."

Mr. Ruhlman stood before Hannah as if he were struck dumb. The letter fell from his hands.

"And she must be there by now," Hannah said to relieve the stress of silence. "But it's little I believe in the old man's forgiveness. I am going out to see for myself as soon as I get my hat."

"You come with me, Hannah. There's some trick under this. We have been slow; perhaps we are too late." He rushed out to the street, Hannah close on his heels; in a moment they were speeding in the automobile toward the Steinberg house.

Every window in the house was silent and dark as they came up the drive. Mr. Ruhlman sprang out and rang the bell. Hannah ran around to the servant's door. He rang again. A light appeared in the hallway. One of the servants opened the door, and conversed in Yiddish with Mr. Ruhlman.

He learned that Samuel and the father had departed for the boat at an East Boston dock; that Rebecca called, but did not wait, as a friend of Samuel's came along in a taxicab and hurried her away to the boat.

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"Hannah, come quickly," shouted Mr. Ruhlman frantically as he dashed down the steps to the car. "In, in," he shouted; "we have not a moment to lose." And to the chauffeur, "Make the East Boston dock as quickly as you can."

He glanced at his watch. "If the boat doesn't sail till ten, we are in time." He was breathing feverishly. "It's now nine." Again he looked at the watch in his trembling hands. "Yes, shoot in there," he whispered to the chauffeur. "Take that cut at Haymarket Square—there's the bridge now—steady—careful—swing to the right—look out—those children ahead—that's it—steady—along, along, along—here we are."

He leaped from the car, beckoned to Hannah, and rushed up the gangway. Some people were sitting in the shadows. He scanned the faces. Having got a hasty permission from one of the stewards, he sent Hannah along the deck. He went cautiously into the lighted salons. None of the Steinberg party were to be seen. He found the purser's office, and scanned the list of the passengers. His finger paused at one familiar name, "Samuel Steinberg, Cabin 14," and right below it, "David Morton, Cabin 15." He hastened up the winding stairs to find "Cabin 15."

Hannah touched his arm and beckoned him to a dark corner near a door. "They are up front there," she whispered, indicating the direction with a shake of her hand.

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"Which of them?" asked Mr. Ruhlman, starting to go.

Hannah put her hand on his arm to stay him. "Rebecca and that Jack McSweeny. I almost ran into them. He was palavering away with her, so I put my handkerchief before my face, took off my hat, and listened to a few words. He says to her, says he, that there's lots of time yet, as the boat doesn't go till half-past ten."

"It sails at ten," Ruhlman felt like shouting; "the purser told me. Let me find them."

"Just another minute of a wait," Hannah held up her hand. "Then I heard him tell her that he would take her down to David Morton's room, and bring Samuel in, and her father to forgive her. It seems that the old man is below with the son. Rebecca would not go, but said she would remain to meet her father in one of the waiting-rooms. And he's gone now to get the father. Just wait a minute."

"He's gone to give that fool of a son some crooked signal. I must stop it," said Ruhlman almost violently.

"Haste makes waste." Hannah broke into an assuring laugh. "It's as sure as the world that they'll all be meeting here in front of us."

Before Mr. Ruhlman could reply, Hannah plucked him by the sleeve. "Quick, this way! Here they come down the wide deck."

They swung into a dim passageway to escape

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Rebecca and McSweeny. As Mr. Ruhlman turned into the shadows he caught sight of Steinberg and his son coming up the stairs.

Out on the deck, Jack stood near Rebecca, hardly more than two yards from the corner where Hannah and Mr. Ruhlman were concealed.

"There's your father," Jack said in a low voice. "He is broken with his grieving, so I will not bother him again. You step in, and he will forgive you. If he does not, I'll be waiting here for you."

"You coward!" Ruhlman almost hissed the words aloud. He saw like a flash through the evil scheme. Rebecca, under the burning sting of her father's rebuff, would fly in tears to this contemptible Jack McSweeny. Samuel would appear, and they would take the dazed child to a cabin below and keep her there till the boat put out. A brother torture his own sister! Mr. Ruhlman's blood tingled at the horrible thought. Jack McSweeny was evidently traveling as David Morton.

Rebecca stepped forward to the lighted salon at the head of the stairs. Her father had his arms on Samuel's shoulders and was loading him with parting sighs and admonitions. Several little groups of passengers and their friends stood in conversation around the spacious salon, waiting for the signal to go ashore. Rebecca saw her father's hand drop from Samuel's shoulder. A

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century of grief seemed to be in his downcast face and drooping head.

"Father, father!" There was sorrow and yet joy in her tone, as she advanced and reached out her arm to embrace her brother.

Steinberg looked dazed when he heard her voice. His head lifted with a jerk, and his eyes glared madly out of his rage. "Away!" His shout startled the spectators. "Away!" he cried again, as his hand clutched her hair and swung her toward the door.

Mr. Ruhlman and Hannah were at her side in an instant. Hannah's arms were fast about the shivering form and she was whispering, "There, now, alanna! alanna! Sure Mr. Ruhlman's car is waiting out here for us." Under her breath she said, as she attended to Rebecca's hair, "May the devils pluck his beard out," and then, "May God forgive me."

"I'll have an officer waiting for you, McSweeny, right there at the gangway." Ruhlman shook his cane as Jack sneaked down the dark deck.

"All ashore who are going ashore!" rang out a strong voice.

Out on the pier, in the shadows, Rebecca and Hannah waited with other spectators to see the huge vessel move out into the harbor. Mr. Ruhlman stood near the gangway to make good his threat, if Jack McSweeny dared to descend. Old

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Steinberg passed with a scowl and withdrew toward the end of the pier.

One by one the thick hawsers dropped splashing into the churning water. The ship labored slowly away from its confinement, shook itself free from the narrow space, veered about, and went with its trailing lights down into the night.

It was night indeed for old Steinberg, as he stood pitilessly alone, watching the vessel disappear beyond the harbor dock. Altogether unsuspecting the evil-doing of his son, he continued to gaze after the boat. A flicker of hope was in his spent heart that Samuel might yet make a name for the cause of glorious Zion. Little did he think that his smooth-faced son had labored zealously almost an entire year for another cause; that the hopeful Samuel, under the tutelage of Jack McSweeny, had sated himself on the flesh-pots of Egypt, had been a lavish patron of the cabaret and other modern pleasures of society, and that he had won distinction as Ernest Kaufman in Socialism. The old man was to learn all this later; each shock was to smite him with the force of a giant's relentless hammer. In a few days he should discover that Samuel had emptied several hiding-places of money, and, by a few simple strokes of a pen, had given a blank bank-cheque the value of seven thousand dollars. Then Lucille Murfie would come, after discovering that Ernest Kaufman was Steinberg's son, and

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demand another bank-cheque for a similar amount.

The trailing lights were gone, and the old man turned slowly from the dock. Out on the roadway Rebecca stood regarding him with her tearful eyes. She, too, had brought suffering to him, but it was to cause no such heart-breaking aftermath as Samuel's. She had changed, but not in her daughterly love and tenderness and ready forgiveness toward her father. He would not receive sincere tokens of love from her Catholic lips and heart. He passed on into the lonely streets among the crowding trucks.

Mr. Ruhlman's car moved slowly over the cobbled street.

"You will stay at my house to-night, both of you," he said with deep kindness, as they drove on.

He halted the car on Washington Street before an office. He went in and sent a cablegram to Harry Crawford at the Chateau d'Anters, *Claireville, près Paris, France.*

"Young Steinberg and McSweeny sailed to-night for Europe. Do not let them come to d'Anters. Be watchful. Don't let Marie be annoyed by David Morton, a faker. Letter following. I come by next boat."

When he reached his house and ushered Rebecca and Hannah to the library, he ran straightway to Marie's room to get the letter which was

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part of her biography. It must go by the next boat; he would rush it to New York by the midnight mail.

The desk was empty; the letter had been stolen. The secret was abroad in the world.

"We must go to Europe as soon as possible," he announced when he came down, waving his hand and pretending to be elated. He had to conceal the storm of his perturbed thoughts. "You shall see old Ireland, Hannah; Rebecca will go, too. And Madame la Marquise will celebrate our coming, and speed us all home again with Marie in a blaze of glory."

III

Four days before Mr. Ruhlman directed that cablegram to Harry Crawford, the young author, being very tired of his desk, went out to the stables and requested one of the keepers to saddle a horse and bring it around to the porch. Harry went up to his room and dressed for the ride.

The earth was rich with the fresh odors of the Maytime. After the April showers, the hedges and the gardens were rioting gloriously in leaf and blossom. Nature was in full carnival; the long tassels of green waved from jubilant larches; the variegated daffodils and crocuses seemed to be engaged in merry dance on the pavilion-like mounds; the vines along the walls crept up, wink-

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ing in the sun, and looked with laughter at the white and pink and green confetti which the fairy fingers of the springtime had cast along the gardens.

Harry rode in through Bellevue and Clamart, along the high-walled roads, bowing to the people in their yards, and breathing in the sunny, smiling delight that ran on beside him. When he reached the fort of Issy he thought suddenly of the dear old lady with whom Marie had stayed, Sœur Julie's aunt. Marie had mentioned her so lovingly; Harry might hear from her words as loving about Marie. Sœur Julie's aunt might speak well of Harry Crawford later.

Not quite as boldly as this did Harry reason himself to a visit. There was a rich glow of healthy sentiment investing all the suggestions that flitted through his mind. Laugh if you will because he struck his whip at the drooping branches of a willow, and asked his horse if it would find the way to *Numero cinque, Rue Baudin,* and then waved his hand to a little child on a garden gate as he went past, saying, *"Vive la France."* What wonder that the horse, feeling the neglected bridle, fell into a slow canter and turned listlessly toward the grassy banks of the fort.

"C'est defendu!" shouted a guard on the wall. For all the little French soldier knew, Harry might have been a German spy. The shrill voice

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and forbidding gesture woke Harry from his reverie. He pulled up the reins, touched spur to his horse, and rode down a circuitous road, leaving the fort high above him.

In a little triangular place, crowded with shops, he drew rein; and while his horse was at the large stone drinking-trough, Harry looked about to see of whom he might inquire for *Rue Baudin*. He suspected that his question would bring a hundred gossips to the windows, and all the townfolk in that neighborhood would clatter away about a stranger who had gone to a little house on the hill. Would Sœur Julie's aunt be pleased afterward at the gossip in the triangle. Harry did not stay to inquire. He knew that the street and house were somewhere at the top of the hill near the fort of Issy.

He turned up a narrow, winding street, and saw ahead a great gateway where he might ask the direction. A solid, high stone wall flanked the road, and he expected to find, at the opening, a view of a magnificent garden. But he was disappointed when he reached the wide, open gate; the heavy stones of the pavement were bulging out in disarray, the trees with their heavy vines filled the place with sombre shadows, benches and broken chairs were packed around a tumbledown coach in the far corner.

Yet, despite the great marks of time and neglect, the courtyard had an air of fascination, when

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Harry began to call up in fancy the scenes that doubtless took place there in far-off years. What equipages with gallant knights and ladies fair had gone under these gate-posts, into the brilliant reception of this massive courtyard! The Chateau—yes, there must have been one—back there on the square mound. Harry could discern among the thick vines the huge foundation-stones, and on either side the marks of wide, semi-circular stairs, like those at Fontainebleau. But Harry was not able to learn from his place in the street that this once was a chateau of the Prince de Condé. He would go into the apparently abandoned courtyard and enjoy a moment nearer the ruins before he went up to *Rue Baudin*. He guided his horse cautiously over the irregular flagstones at the approach of the gate. He was surprised to see at the left of the yard, behind the high wall, a neat little cement-covered cottage, with a door leading into the court.

Was he intruding, he asked himself, as he prepared to dismount. He swung his horse around, and slipped carefully down. Yet not carefully enough. A loose stone was beneath him when he flung his foot clear of the stirrup. The stone turned sharply, and Harry fell backward with a heavy wrench of his left ankle. He tried to rise, but the foot pained and he remained seated a minute to decide what to do.

The door of the little cottage flew open and a

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gentle-faced woman and a young man came running toward him.

"Are you hurt?" asked the man in French. "The yard is a bad place for horses."

The woman was kneeling beside Harry, and began to untie his shoe.

"I think if you can get me to my horse," Harry spoke French very slowly, and with very many gestures, "I shall be able to ride home."

"Oh, no, dear child," said the woman in sweet, pleading tones. "Let us take you into the house. Henri will have a doctor here in no time. You know the English proverb—a stitch in time saves nine."

Harry was surprised to hear the woman give the proverb in broken English. Doubtless because he was thinking of Marie, he fancied he detected in the woman's face, in her deep, beautiful eyes, in the lines at her mouth, and the firm curve of her chin, a striking resemblance to Marie.

"Henri will have the doctor in no time," she said again, as she gently took off the shoe. "Now you will let us assist you in." She put her arm in his, and Henri drew the other about his neck. The three went slowly into the house, and Harry was placed tenderly on a couch.

Henri ran out and, mounting the horse, sped away for a doctor. His mother kept applying homeopathic remedies to the paining ankle, rub-

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bing it with some ointment to keep down the swelling, and bound it in tight bandages.

The doctor came and found that no tendon or bone was broken. The ankle would pain, "but Monsieur was able to bear a little pain." Then he bound the ankle firm in bands and went his way.

"Henri will telephone to your friends if you wish," said the woman kindly. "Yet as the doctor says, you must not move about for a week without a crutch, and you are welcome to remain with us."

Harry thanked her cordially, once in hesitating French, and again in readier English. "And I see that Monsieur Henri rides well. If he has an hour, perhaps he will ride out to the Chateau d'Anters at Claireville, and tell Monsieur le Marquis that I am here."

"D'Anters?" asked the mother with great surprise. Her lips were parted for another question, but she turned, still with a look of amazement, and said, "Henri will go. Is it easy to find the Chateau—did you say the Chateau d'Anters?"

"Everybody in Claireville knows," he answered, with a smile, "and Henri will find the door without asking."

The tall, handsome young man bent down and kissed his mother, then shook Harry's hand as he bade him, "*Au revoir.*" The mother went into

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another room to fetch a book of illustrations to Harry, and he could hear her telling a servant to prepare tea for the visitor.

Over the couch on which he lay was a broad marble mantel, and hanging beside it, almost in reach of Harry's hand, was a bracket containing a few photographs. Harry glanced at the pictures, not with any marked interest, until his eye caught sight of one. He gave a start which almost shook him from the couch. He lifted himself to a sitting posture and drew the bracket toward him. He could hardly believe his eyes. There was the very picture which the Marquis d'Anters had brought into the tower room, the picture that had been found on Marie's floor. What witchery was this? How did this picture steal away from the clasp on his desk and fall into place in this bracket? It was the same picture, the very same photograph, the plain, hard, Yankee face, with the compressed lips, the lines of determination, no poetry or love in the eyes.

Harry took the photograph from the fold of the bracket. It could not be the same picture—it must be another copy—it did not have pencilled words on the back with Marie's name.

"Pardon me," the woman said gently as she entered, "you must rest. I will show you the pictures, and here is a large book of pretty views."

Harry had his eye still on the strange photo-

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graph of the Yankee face. Then, feeling that his curiosity might be embarassing to his hostess, he let the bracket fall into its place, and he put his head on the pillow.

"Monsieur has traveled?" she asked, as she placed the book near the invalid. "Monsieur——"

"Harry Crawford," he gave his name, bowing an apology for having interrupted her.

"Monsieur Crawford will know many of these scenes."

But he could not keep the photograph out of his thoughts.

He had to ask, though the question came not brusquely, "These are family pictures?" He nodded toward the bracket.

"Many of them," was the brief answer. She did not appear anxious to talk about them.

Harry, begging pardon for his curiosity, inquired if the picture he was looking at was a Yankee's.

The woman smiled and shook her head in affirmation. "His name is David Morton. Does Monsieur Crawford happen to know him?"

"I have never seen him," answered Harry, "but I think I have a picture like that one."

"A picture like that?" She rose with agitation and drawing her hands over her eyes, she took the photograph from the bracket; holding it to the light, she asked again "A picture like that?"

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"I think so," quietly answered Harry. "I will bring it to you, when I shall be able to come down this way again."

"That is strange," the woman said in a low, calm voice. She drew back toward a chair and leaned on it. A mist was in her eyes, which Harry saw. "That is a picture of my husband, David Morton. He has been gone nearly twenty years."

Harry was dumb with consternation. How had a copy of the picture found its way into the Chateau d'Anters. A thousand perplexing questions hit him at once, and left him speechless.

"But Monsieur Crawford is fatigued," the sweet voice broke the silence, and a gentle hand arranged the pillows. "You must rest before Henri returns with your friends, and afterward look at this book of pictures. Some other day you may come with the other photograph. I would like to see it, and to know how it came to your house."

He did not have a chance to say that the picture probably belonged to Miss Marie Ruhlman, who was visiting at the chateau d'Anters. The motherly woman went quickly from the room. An hour later, the automobile from d'Anters was outside waiting for him. The Marquis was not at home, and a servant sent the machine to fetch Harry.

Henri helped his mother to serve the tea; a

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pleasant conversation followed; and he invited Henri to come out for a day at the Chateau.

That night, before he went to bed in his tower room, he wrote a short note to Mr. Ruhlman in Boston. He thought to send one to Marie, but doubting that it would find her in time he had to be satisfied with one brief letter. That, too, was not to reach Mr. Ruhlman in due time. It would pass him mid-way on the Atlantic. There were salutations in the note—and then: "Can you tell me who is David Morton, or do you know how his photograph reached d'Anters?"

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CHAPTER XIV

THE MORTONS

I

HARRY CRAWFORD was very readily persuaded by the affable Marquis d'Anters to abandon the writing-desk while his sprained ankle was out of service. A rolling-chair and a servant brought him to the porch for the pleasant hours of the May mornings and evenings. Books were at hand to render their enjoyment to that which the beautiful vistas of garden and remote uplands afforded. Then, in the manner of Robert Louis Stevenson, he had a notebook and pencil within reach, to practise writing—"fitting what I saw with appropriate words," as Stevenson wrote of himself.

The photograph of David Morton was hidden in a desk of the tower-room. Harry was not unmindful of his promise to take it to the little house in the tumble-down courtyard of Issy; but he had to be content to stay at Claireville till his foot was in a better condition. He had assured himself that the two copies of the photograph were alike—the same faded tint of time upon both, the same imprint of the photographer, *Dubois et fils, Avenue de la Paix,* written in dim gilt letters in the lower left corner.

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"The Mountains would not come to Mahomet; let Mahomet go to the mountains," Harry said, as a new suggestion entered his deliberations. "Could you spare the machine for a little friendly tour to-day?" he asked the Marquis, who was departing for Paris. The Marquis was going to the city by train.

"You are not contemplating a ride?" asked the Marquis, a little surprised. "You have taken but three or four days of rest; the ankle is scarcely well enough."

"I am not going to stir from here till you return," Harry answered. "I had in mind a little hour with those two good Samaritans whom I met at Issy the other day. It is for them I proposed the automobile—they seemed anxious to hear from me, and I think they would enjoy a spin over the roads."

"By all means, have them come;" the Marquis shook Harry's hand, as he started for the station. "I'll send you the chauffeur. Your servant will get lunch for them, and show them the gardens."

Harry had not mentioned the subject of David Morton's picture to the Marquis d'Anters. He had narrated the circumstances of his injury, and the delicate care which he received from "the Madame, and her son, Henri, a splendid-looking fellow, about my age, a lad with princely blood in him, I would say; certainly he had the bearing of a gentleman, and was worthy of his gracious,

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beautiful mother." That was the only description which Harry gave of his benefactors in Issy.

Harry was seated on the porch, when the car returned from Issy with Madame Morton and her son. David Morton's picture remained in his room; a servant knew where to find it. Harry wished to have his friends enjoy a rest and then a ramble through the interesting house and around the beautiful lawns and parterres, before the photograph should be brought down. He had only a conjecture to make, when the time came to show it to the visitors.

"This is a house which has had in its day many guests, hundreds of them, from all quarters of the globe. Perhaps Mr. Morton visited here, as I and many others have done; and he may have sent a photograph to the Chateau afterward, and then it passed from room to room till it came my way."

Harry was surprised at his own conjecture when he expressed it. He almost inclined to certitude that this was the explanation of the picture. After all, it had no connection with Marie Ruhlman, the young American niece of Mr. Ruhlman. Yes, he was certain in his judgment; he put the picture aside, and forgot entirely the pencil writing on the back.

"But the photograph was made nearly twenty years ago," Madame Morton said gently; her face, which before wore a look of anxiety, relaxed

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into a smile. "Was this house, this Chateau d'Anters existing then?"

Harry wondered why she distinguished between this d'Anters and some other. He could not tell when the Harringtons had acquired this d'Anters. "I came here only last fall, and then returned to Boston. But my mother's dear friend, Lady McCornish of London, has been a visitor here for the past ten years." Harry's gestures were of great assistance to his faltering French. The mother and son could assure him in little English phrases that they understood him.

"Yet I think it scarcely probable that Mr. Morton visited here," she said. "He would have told me of this beautiful place.'

Harry waited to hear more; without doing hurt to his own sense of propriety he could not make further inquiries. Why should he urge a strange woman to relate what must be a painful reminiscence to her? He had offered her the best explanation that he could invent on the moment. If the Marquis d'Anters were at hand, Harry could easily learn whether David Morton had ever visited the Chateau. There—he would change the subject, unless Madame Morton and Henri wished to continue the story about a man who had left his wife and child long ago.

"Over there—you see through the arches of the trees," he was pointing across the valley, "is

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the convent. Madame d'Anters"—(why did Madame Morton always look up so surprised when he mentioned that name?) "Madame d'Anters is quite friendly with the nuns. Ward and Maxwell go there on Saturdays when they are in Claireville."

Madame Morton had risen from her seat, and was moving forward to obtain a clearer view of the convent. A trace of sadness—such Harry thought he detected—crept over her face as she stood regarding the white-walled building. "I used to know the place well, years and years ago. And though we are only a few miles away, Henri and I have never come out to see it after all these years."

"But we are going to see them, to-day, my mother," said Henri, who, with a bow to Harry, went and stood near her.

"On our way home," she added, as she came and sat by Harry again. "My cousin, a sweet girl, who used to live with us at home, joined the Order of nuns over there. I feel guilty for not having come to see her before she went away on some far foreign mission. And though I could easily have found out her address, I never took the trouble to do so, and I have never written to her. Henri," she turned quickly toward her son, saying with a playful look of contrition, "your mother has been very wicked."

"But you may confess your sins right away,"

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Henri said, as he leaned forward and put his arm about her neck. "Monsieur Crawford will excuse us if we run over to see Cousin Marguerite's school."

Harry rang a little bell for a servant, and with a playful smile, addressed Henri. "But since your mother alone has the penance to do, why may we not send her alone on her pilgrimage? The car will take her" (he told the servant to summon the chauffeur), "and while Madame, your mother, is confessing to the nuns, and being forgiven and told to come again and again, you and I can play at kings and queens upon this empire of chess."

A child of five could hardly have put more playfulness into his words and intonations. What was this Chateau d'Anters, thought Henri Morton, that it could make one of those hard-headed, practical Yankees indulge in so youthful an air. He looked with joyous frankness into Harry's beaming eyes and said, as he turned toward his mother, "That is not a penance too severe; is it?" His beautiful manly voice broke into childish laughter.

Harry felt so delighted that his own simple words had made them forget David Morton—cruel or unfortunate?—who had left his wife and child so many years ago.

"Yet I would like to go on the pilgrimage, too," added Henri, "if Monsieur Crawford

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wishes to keep the kingdom of chess till another day."

Harry waved his hand and shook his head, as if to imitate a severe judge. "Madame, so it please you, may go first. Here is the car, you see. Then when she has satisfied her conscience, the car will bring her back to d'Anters, and we shall celebrate the return of the lost sheep."

They could not hide their merry pleasure at Harry's speech. His splendid face, the clear, open look under that strong forehead, seemed to them worthy of the beautiful Mayday. The flowers, the fresh hedges, the trees waving in the balmy air and the varied songs of the birds created childhood around Harry Crawford. A flock of finches, like flashes of golden sunlight, flew into the garden, and with twittering laughter kept at their undulating flight among the trees, like children playing hide-and-seek.

"Then, too," he proceeded, "Madame, our pilgrim, will be anxious to tell the nuns of her noble and devoted son" (they laughed a little protest at his words), "and she would not speak that way, if her own dear son were present. Then they will ask to see him—and so, you see," he waved his hand, "you shall have two visits, which are better than one, especially when there are so many years of penance to be done."

"Monsieur Crawford must be writing stories, it seems to me," Madame Morton spoke and rose

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to go to the automobile. "He thinks up plots very quickly."

"Very, very slowly, if you but knew." He raised his hand and shook his head in emphasis.

But, here, now (he almost spoke aloud), he was not going to allude to that book. Too many knew about it already; too many were going to scorn him for his miserable failure.

They were arranging the chessmen on the board a minute after the car swung through the *porte-cochère*. What was it that gave Harry such a feeling of genuine, unaffected intimacy with these visitors? What was in their manner, in their entire ways, their looks and voices and bearing, that prevented him from considering them as strangers, that prompted him to be familiar with them, as if they had come from a village of his happy childhood? Was this attitude of his, this manner in which he had been entertaining the Mortons, an effect of a year of similar conduct toward others? He had come like an old friend to Claireville; at least, the welcome at d'Anters, partly due to Lady McCornish's letter, could scarcely have been more cordial. Then Mr. Ruhlman immediately received him as an established friend. Nobody, excepting old Steinberg, had been uncivil to him. Marie—he had to recall that she had raised his hand to her lips.

"I beg your pardon," he broke from his dis-

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traction, and saw that Henri had been patiently waiting for him to place the pawns upon the board. "Madame, your mother, is surely at the convent by now," the remark was perhaps intended to cover his distraction.

"I noticed that you were surprised when she alluded to d'Anters, or emphasized that word."

Henri was a close observer, then, thought Harry. "Yes," he replied candidly. He was able to say that word in French without gesticulating; but his eyes betrayed his surprise at Henri's remark.

"There is another d'Anters—may I say so?" Henri added.

"Indeed?" Harry's tone invited more about the other d'Anters.

"Yes, mother is of the old family d'Anters," the other said with charming modesty. "By her mother's people she is related to the Prince de Condé. The little house where we live looks on the court of a famous country-house which the Prince once owned. Issy was far from Paris a hundred years ago, but now, as you see, it is almost at the door, the *Porte de Versailles* so near."

It was clear, when he moved nearer the table to begin the game of chess, that his manly modesty did not wish to continue the recital about his princely relations. But Harry was anxious to know more.

"I wonder how my friend, la Marquise

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d'Anters, came by the name?" he asked. "It is strange that, living so near to Claireville, you did not hear the name, or that she never got word about your mother's family."

"Mother did not use the name, after my father left." His voice touched a plaintive note. Quickly brightening again, he said, "I was pleased that you did not inquire more about father. It must pain mother. Doubtless you noticed the early gray in her hair."

There was a silence. Harry was pleased that he had not blundered with poky questions about David Morton. However, here was a brave young man before him now; it would be cordial and courteous sympathy to ask him a question.

"Your father never returned or sent word to you?"

"We heard that he arrived in New York," Henri answered, moving back from the table, ready to speak to a sympathetic listener. "He had a position with the American Consul in Paris. I understand that he was a man of promise in the business and diplomatic world. Perhaps he was disappointed when he learned that mother was not wealthy or that her family connections could not advance him. Mother and her cousin, Marguerite, the nun to whom she referred, are the last of the family d'Anters, excepting me, and——" he dropped his voice again, and his words hesitated, "unless my sister be alive.

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My father stole her away. Her name was Marie."

"Marie?" Harry ejaculated, as he leaped forward in his chair and almost put the wounded ankle back to a month of nursing. His hand swept knights and queens and kings from the board.

Henri stood up in greater agitation. There was an imploring look in his eyes as he whispered gently, "Do you know her?"

"Just the name," Harry felt a burning shame that he had to disappoint this splendid brother. "I was unfortunately thinking of Marie Ruhlman, when you gave the name, Marie."

Henri sat down. After all, he should have expected a disappointment.

"But, look!" cried Harry suddenly. His hand reached for the photograph of David Morton. "Look! What a blockhead I was not to think of this when your mother was here! See! The name, Marie, is written on the back of this."

Henri took the picture lovingly in his hands and kissed the name, "Oh, surely somebody can tell us how this picture came here; somebody will tell us." Henri's voice rang up from the heart. He was not weak with emotion. His eyes were dim with tears, his lips were quivering, but there was an air of powerful strength, great moral courage, shining through his face. He kissed the name again, and with a steady hand, gently

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placed the picture near Harry. With a far-off look, he gazed across the valley, as if he was expecting a reply from the distant hills.

"I will consult Mr. Harrington again," Harry noticed that Henri turned at the new name, and he explained; "Mr. Harrington, he is the Marquis d'Anters. He may be able to help us. And I will write this very evening to Marie's home in America, and to Marie Ruhlman herself. She is traveling in Italy now, through the towns along the east coast." He was afraid of inspiring Henri with new hopes which might be shattered later; he said accordingly, "It is hardly probable that Marie or her uncle" (he accented the word), "will be able to enlighten us."

He was going to add, however, that the photograph had been found in Marie Ruhlman's room of the Chateau; but he deemed it wiser to leave that unsaid for the present.

A cloud crossed the sun, and a deep hush fell on the air, as the birds ceased their little warbling songs and chirpings, and the flowers stood silent in the shadow. After a long minute of the silence, the sun showed its rich warm rays again, and all the scene was filled with gladdened voices and dancing colors.

"Perhaps—perhaps," Henri began thoughtfully. "We ought not to tell mother of all these things—not yet, at least. It is painful, is disappointment." He reached over for Harry's hand,

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his deep, loving eyes with an expression which should mean, "I can count on you as a brother."

Harry pressed the strong, firm hand; in his eyes was a faithful light which answered in kind, "You must count on me as a brother."

"I can run out to see you," Henri's face was beaming. "Don't write. If you write a letter, I should read it to mother, you know, and then she might be distressed at the news."

Before Harry could turn the conversation to a new subject, the automobile turned in by the porter's lodge, and in a few moments stood panting at the stairs of the porch. Madame Morton almost flew up to her son; and having put her arm in his, she turned with radiant gladness and addressed Harry. "My cousin, my cousin Marguerite is living. She is known as Sœur Julie, and is in a convent in Nova Scotia."

Harry's lips were ready for another ejaculation; his eyes were wide open with amazement. But he kept in mind the request of Henri. And with a benign look, hiding his other feelings, he said, "Your penance—the pilgrimage and the confession—brought you a reward."

He rang for a servant, and ordered a little lunch, "a little morsel," to be served in the porch.

"And the nuns told me that a charming girl, one of Sœur Julie's pupils, has been visiting this great house." Madame Morton had her hand upon her son's head, as she stood near his chair.

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"Marie Ruhlman, I think, is the name. Your good friends, the d'Anters, might let me see her, so that I might have a long account about my cousin, my only cousin, Sœur Julie."

"Madame la Marquise will welcome you, will insist that you come, I assure you. See!" Harry swept his hand around toward the Chateau; "All these walls, all these sunny gardens have their foundations on hospitality and friendship. I must proclaim that on behalf of my good friends."

"And I heard, too, of Sœur Julie's aunt at Issy." She seated herself by her son, and with a look of self-reproach, said in a low tone, "It is all my fault, my son."

He understood; but she offered an explanation for Harry's benefit. "After my husband left me, I hid from my few friends, as I think I said before. That is why I lost track of them, and how even in Issy I could live only a few streets away from Sœur Julie's aunt and not know, and she not be aware of my little house in the court-yard of the Prince de Condé."

After a pause, while a servant was arranging the table, she added, "She is Sœur Julie's aunt by her father's people. Marguerite and I are cousins german on our mother's side. Yet I will be anxious to see the dear old lady."

Harry, during the talk, did not reveal that he was on his way to this very aunt of Sœur Julie

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the day when he met with the accident in the courtyard. Such an admission should have revealed the process by which he came to know the aunt. Marie's name must be kept in a silent background for the present, as he had promised.

"The car will take you to her house, on your way home," he said cordially; "and you must all come out here when Sœur Julie's pupil returns from Italy."

The automobile was waiting for the visitors when the little refreshments were taken, and the table removed.

"Your penance is not ended," Harry pretended a serious air as he spoke, and pointed in the direction of the convent. "I am sure that the good nuns have ordered you to bring my young friend with you." He held Henri's firm, warm hand.

"They are anxious to see him," a mother's love was in her voice. "The poor nuns! They escaped the severity of our cruel legislation in these recent years. The good people of this house managed to protect them. But there are new rumors. The Freemasons and the Jews in the Chamber are wild to crush the few poor Congregations that survived, and the little convent of Claireville has already received hints of menace."

"A queer state of things," Harry was indignant. "Why do they prate about liberty and

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equality and fraternity—words I have seen written upon their public buildings—unless they grant people one little spark of the light of liberty! Hypocrites!" And turning suddenly toward Henri he asked, "Must you serve in the army?"

"They can not compel me," he answered. "My father was an American citizen, as I was able to prove to them at the Embassy. I would not serve the machinations of these infidels. France is Catholic, but her people have been too long asleep."

Henri had left his seat and was standing by his mother. "It would be difficult to know what to do if war should come. Certainly I would not fight for the rascals who have lowered our banner and trampled it in the mud." His head lifted with noble temper; his hand stroked the veil on his mother's head, as he said, looking in her eyes, "But I would die for my mother's country." Then he added as he bade farewell to Harry, "They drive out our saintly men and women, and corrupt the world with evil doctrines of Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, Condillac, and the Encyclopædists, and in these later times with the salacious wit of London and the black fogs of German atheists. God will chastise poor France."

"La belle France," added the mother, bowing graciously to Harry, before she entered the car.

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II

Harry Crawford could not expeditiously pursue his investigations about the photograph. How could he, without the use of his legs, play the rummager about the house? He had to be content to send a servant upon a scouring expedition through all the attic rooms to see if there were any abandoned albums of photographs. But his hopes and efforts proved futile.

A message came over the telephone from the Marquis d'Anters and announced that he would be gone to Chartres and Angers upon business for two days. Harry had nothing to do but wait till the Marquis returned. He hated the sight of the gloomy stack of notes upon his desk—the block of paper and the pens, waiting to assist in the making of a historical romance.

He could hear the sough of a night wind as it strayed among the tall pine-trees. Now and then a bird chirped a bit of frightened song. From a far hill came the pulsating threnody such as whippoorwills have in the United States.

Harry tried to write letters to Marie and Mr. Ruhlman; but labor as he might in careful phrases that spoke of David Morton and the visitors, he was ill-satisfied with the results, and flung them into the fire as he wheeled himself toward his bed-chamber.

In the morning the cablegram from Mr. Ruhl-

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man almost paralyzed him. He was stunned; his fingers clutched the paper, his head went swimming in the dizzy air. What ominous news was this—young Steinberg and McSweeny were coming to Europe! Did they wish to surprise Harry Crawford and fulfil a threat? Well, let them come on. His ankle would be strong again before the boat landed. Jack McSweeny shall have his face flattened against a wall, and be thrown into a cesspool. Samuel Steinberg shall have his *bec d'aigle* nose tweaked in sight of all the people from Claireville to Issy; he will be lucky to find shelter even in the morgue behind Notre Dame.

But casting McSweeny and Steinberg from his mind, he had to think of Rebecca. To what pass had she come in her sad affairs that she was fleeing over the ocean with Hannah? That was not a difficult question to answer; the message announced that Mr. Ruhlman was coming by the same boat. Here was the solution—and Harry could quickly dismiss that item of the cablegram; Mr. Ruhlman was taking a holiday, and, with his generous spirit he made it possible for Rebecca and the devoted servant to have one. They would be companions to Marie on the homeward trip in June.

Then came the two lines that made him pause, that sent his thoughts scurrying in every direction, unmanageable and baffled at every turn. What was this sudden alarm with regard to

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Marie's welfare? How could word of any peril concerning her have reached America without stopping first at d'Anters. Were not her letters—and he had one only the other day—filled with the delight of her travels, and the merry prattle of a heart equal to Maxwell's in childish gayety? Had she not counted the days that intervened between her letter from Venice and the return to Claireville when she would be able to read "a book by a young author?" Surely no unseen wireless system, capable of transmitting the gossip of three people on the porch yesterday afternoon, had reported the conversation about Madame Morton and her cousin Marguerite; no magic mirage had shown to Marie the picture of David Morton and the name upon the back. And if it did, what effect could that have upon her—upon her, the Christian niece of a broadminded, devoted American Jew?

The long afternoon wore his thoughts down to a feeling like hot sand. Turn where he would, cast his eyes in any quarter for a response, he found no glimmer of hope to ease the throbbing anxiety. This solicitude for Marie would have been burden enough for his perplexed thoughts; but there stood another item in the long catalogue of mystifying information which the cablegram contained. David Morton! His name again? It sounded like an echo out of the conversation with Henri. David Morton was going to harass

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the Chateau d'Anters—was that the meaning? That was it; Harry clapped his hands so hard upon the table, at this decisive judgment, that a a servant ran up to his room to see if he signaled for assistance. Yes, he remained satisfied with his solution; David Morton, a worthless renegade from his charming wife and son, the kidnapper of his own daughter, was alive, and alert enough to imagine that he could with profit to his purse attack the house at Claireville for having stolen his wife's distinguished family name, and employed the prestige of that honorable name for building up the fortunes of plebeian Americans. But Harry Crawford would meet him at the gate, encounter him in the street, challenge him in any court of law; he would show the dishonor of the man, the base profligacy of the wretch who cowardly left his devoted home, and, like a brigand of the mountainous east, pitilessly tore a child from its mother's arms.

Yet quiet would not come to Harry Crawford's mind; his room seemed to have air of leaden weight, his head felt cased in a ball of tingling noises.

Fortunately, he said, there should be a letter from Marie and Maxwell in two or three days. That would dispel this impenetrable cloud of worry. And then—he looked at a calendar—Mr. Ruhlman would be here in ten days at the latest.

His face brightened, his heart cast off the

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stifling oppression, and was ready for an hour with such playful spirits as Maxwell and Marie and Henri Morton. He was fatigued and the hour was late. Harry's relief from the long day of confusing meditations over the cablegram assured him that sleep would easily come to him.

Passing his desk, as he wheeled along toward the bed-chamber, his eyes fell on the stack of notes and the pictures which were waiting for the call of an author's pen. He paused a few minutes in deep reflection; then drawing himself from the chair and standing on his sound foot for a moment, he knelt down to pray. It was a strange sight he presented to his own eyes; he could scarcely recall the time when he had last uttered a prayer. But Christ was his authoritative voice now; Christ, who had spoken prophecies that were fulfilled, Christ, whose word was God's, who had established a Rock and a perpetual Church thereon—He had taught men to pray. Three times, as Harry knew from his studies, had Christ on one evening—the great night of loving words before He died—three separate times on that momentous occasion had He counseled men about the powerful effect of prayer. "Amen, amen I say to you: if you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it to you." Harry knew the words by heart.

There are not many sights in this world of ours more inspiring than that of a man kneeling

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in ardent, humble prayer, his eyes with the trustful light of a child, his heart in a peace which that gross thing called the world knows not of, his mind assured that physical vigor and intellectual power and financial wealth are but poor possessions in comparison with a spiritual joy which, under the sunlight of truth, reigns in every thought and impulse of the soul. Harry Crawford bowed his head and knelt in prayer. "Ask and you shall receive," had been spoken by his omnipotent Master. In the name of Christ, he whispered his humble needs to the Father of all good gifts; and one fervent petition was in behalf of Marie, that she might be secure from dangers in strange lands and from peril on the way.

It was a prayer which Marie needed at that very hour.

III

Harry Crawford counted the hours till the morning which, according to the established order of weekly letters, was to bring him one from Marie. A letter came, but the envelope showed the heavy, flowing hand of Madame la Marquise. Harry was conscious of a slight nervousness as he tore the edge from the envelope.

"My dear Harry: I would have written this to my husband, but, according to calculations, he must be at this time away on a business tour. He wanted to arrange his business affairs before

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we sailed for America toward the end of June, as we were planning to do. The trip must be cancelled or postponed to a later day. Hence I am sending you this letter.

"You will be grieved to hear that Marie is very ill. There now—do not rush off with uncovered head for the first train. Not even if Marie's uncle were in Europe should he be allowed to enter the sick-room. The doctor's orders are imperative, no visitor shall be permitted to disturb her rest. Maxwell and Ward are not admitted for the present. So, you see, dear Harry, that you must remain there in Claireville, and if a more serious turn comes, I will telegraph to you. I sent a cablegram to Marie's uncle yesterday morning and I am astonished that he has not replied."

Harry was now able to move about with a cane; he went to the door and called a servant. He would send a telegram, and tell the Marquise that Mr. Ruhlman was on the ocean for the past three or four days. But first, Harry Crawford should be calm and finish the letter.

"Marie's sickness came about in this way. We went for a short cruise on the Adriatic a week ago. We left Ancona for Venice, as you know, and then, after enjoying a few days there, we came down by the coast again, put in at Ancona, and went directly by train to Rome. I was anxious to close our trip, and pack our things to

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return. Moreover, I noticed that Marie was not in the best of health, whether from the fatigue of the hurried visit to Venice or from the peculiar weather which followed us on the Adriatic, I can not tell. When we reached Rome she showed symptoms of fever. I sent for our doctor and he ordered us away at once to the hills of Tivoli. A typhoid epidemic is raging in some districts near the city.

"Unfortunately, as we were riding out of Tivoli in a limousine, Marie carefully wrapped, and the doctor gone ahead by train, I allowed her to have her letters, thinking that they would tend to cheer her spirits and while away the time. I had to regret my foolish action. I should have scanned the letters first, and so have averted a terrible event.

"One of the letters had a Boston postmark of a very recent date. It had been forwarded to d'Anters. Would that you or my husband had held it.

"It was from a strange man named David Morton. I can not tell you all that he said. He claimed to be Marie's father" ("There, there you are!" cried Harry, "Henri Morton! Henri Morton, I have found your Marie!"), "and he had a story of how she had been taken from him as a blood-bond by a Jew, Mr. Ruhlman. David Morton was coming to Europe, and would look for his daughter, but in secret, and he would send

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trustworthy friends for her. The Jew was hounding him from coast to coast. But Marie's mother, said he, would come and take her daughter from the Jew; justice shall make him pay heavily for his crime. Unless he divided his fortune with Marie and her broken-hearted parents, Ruhlman shall be revealed in hideous odium to the city of Boston and to the whole world."

"It's a damnable lie!" Harry stood up to meet the liar.

"It's a poorly concocted story, I am sure," the letter went on. "Yet it dealt its pernicious sting before I could answer it. Marie uttered a shriek and, being already in a weak condition, she fell into a deathlike swoon. I never expected to get her alive to our hotel. She was delirious, and muttered phrases about her false uncle. There was something about a census-taking, about her doubts last year in the Washington Convent; and then with burning tears, while her hands were like ice, she said that it could not be so; her own mother could not have been kinder than Uncle Ruhlman.

"I must not continue—I am anxious to get this away on the next mail. I want you to keep a sharp eye, and put off this David Morton for the present. It would be sure death for Marie, if any intruder came now, even her own loving mother. That is why I want you to remain where you are. She is not so delirious now; but the

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doctor is imperative about quiet and sleep. Two nuns from a nearby convent are here night and day. The priest comes and when he is not praying outside the door, he takes Maxwell and Ward down to ramble by the wonderful cascade and up among the sheepfolds on the hills."

Harry quickly despatched a long telegram. Mr. Ruhlman was soon due in Paris. Harry would attend to any David Morton who dared to disturb the restful slumber of the sweetest child under the sun. He reread the last paragraph of the letter in which he was told that "yesterday after Marie awoke from a long refreshing sleep she called for Maxwell and Harry Crawford. When Maxwell stood by her cot she asked if he had written his book yet, and she put up her hand for him to kiss."

Again he read these last words, and put the letter to his lips, at the words, "she put up her hand for him to kiss." It was no weak, sentimental tear which he rubbed from his eye, as he knelt down; and in the strength of that growing friendship for Christ, he recalled a scene where the divine Lover of the children of men was summoned in an hour of sorrow. Harry formed his prayer after that of Martha and Mary: "Lord, behold, she whom Thou lovest is sick."

IV

Harry shook off every vestige of worry and anxious watchfulness when Henri Morton called

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at the Chateau a few days later. He met his visitor with a cordial greeting and, his ankle being as strong as ever it was, he walked briskly about and took Henri up and down the gardens, making him select with the surest appreciation the flowers that were to be culled and arranged into a charming bouquet for Madame Morton.

"Are all Americans like you?" Henri asked with splendid naiveté.

"Better!" answered Harry, and pretended to be scandalized when Henri doubted his word. "Did you ever see an American sprain his ankle for no reason at all? No, you never did. Did you ever know an American who made such a fuss over a sprained ankle?" Harry could not say "fuss" in French. His gesture to express it was a loud crack upon an empty barrel and a reeling motion as if he were about to fall.

"But who can be so charming to recuperate as an American?" asked Henri.

"Anybody who knows the d'Anters of Issy and of Claireville." Here, this would never do—this kind of talk was good enough for women in a salon or over teacups. "They play baseball in the United States from now till early autumn," he added.

Henri did not know what baseball was like; but he had an eye to see that Harry was an athlete. "You must have been in vigorous games."

"Football," replied Harry; and without being

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requested, he went on to describe some of the general features of the game. "You stand there!" Harry was explaining "lineup." Surely his earnest effort to keep Henri from any talk about Marie and David Morton was to blame for submitting Henri to a test of strength. "Stand firm! Now, seven men against each other as we are. Now, see which team pushes the other across the lawn."

"Your foot, your foot," said Henri, indicating the recently injured ankle.

"Stronger than ever, and aching only for a little exercise." He jumped and stamped to prove his assertion.

Henri laughed at the picture they both made. Were they children out of school, or lambs frisking about, all unconcerned about the thoughts and opinions of spectators. There was old Jacques, the tapestry-weaver, watching them from a distance.

"With all your might now!" Their shoulders were firmly set.

"And you with all your might," playfully answered Henri, as he held himself immovable.

Harry stood back, after he had done his utmost to dislodge Henri Morton from his position. He looked at the smiling lad, so lithe, yet so wiry. How did this charming young Frenchman, graceful and almost delicate as a girl, manage to keep in such strength? Where did he get the

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blood that gave him that clean, healthy skin, that unblenching eye, those lips so refined, so firmly set? "You could find a place on any football team in America," Harry said with heavy breathing that was not feigned.

As the afternoon wore on, Harry was at a loss to invent other distractions. He knew that he had promised to communicate whatever information he procured about the picture of David Morton. But how could he touch on that subject at this critical time? In sheer desperation he rushed up to his room with the visitor, and began to talk about his proposed book. He felt like a fool; but to what other subject could he turn? Even if he had sworn never to mention that book to another person beyond those who, alas! were already acquainted with it, what hearty resolve was binding in necessities which own no laws?

To his surprise, Henri was deeply interested in the argument about prophecies. "That is a process of reasoning with which I am conversant a little," he said very modestly. "I have studied, and am studying yet at the seminary in Issy. We have a long study on this subject which you mention. You seem to have attended a portion of our classes in the course of Apologetics."

"The seminary?" Harry looked inquiringly at his young confident. "May I ask if that means that you are preparing for the priesthood?"

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"The seminary studies have that end in view," was the reply. "But I am not a boarder. I come and go; by special permission am I allowed to pursue the courses. I live at home with Mother, as you noticed the other day." He paused; and realizing that he had not answered Harry's question fully, he added: "I am not taking Holy Orders. If Mother were differently arranged, I might go upon a foreign mission, if God's will was for that, or enter a Religious Order, though France has driven them away."

Henri went on to tell of a priest whom he knew at the great college on Rue Vaugirard in Paris. It appeared that this Father was a member of the same Order which teaches at Holy Cross; accordingly, Harry was able to meet his friend on similar ground of acquaintanceship.

So the afternoon passed away pleasantly, without allusion to the subject of Marie or the picture. The Marquis d'Anters had returned to Paris, but telephoned that he would not come to Claireville that night.

Henri's delicate sense of refinement had kept him from forcing forward any conversation about David Morton. Yet his face had a shade which denoted a longing desire, as he prepared to take his departure.

"I have not forgotten my word upon our subject of the other day," Harry said, taking his

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friend's arm warmly. "I am awaiting the arrival of a good man, a very tireless traveler from America. When he comes—and I will meet him with the automobile in Paris—I will make inquiries; and your good mother and you—gracious, what muscles you have," Harry was trying to divert that handsome lad from looking so wistfully at him—"you shall know as soon as seven-league boots can take me." He laughed at his stride which was intended to illustrate a step with such boots.

V

Slow hours dragged along by day and night till Mr. Ruhlman telegraphed that he and his party had landed at Boulogne-sur-Mer. The next train would bring them to Paris at noon—*Gare St. Lazare.*

Harry was overjoyed that the Marquis d'Anters was too occupied over affairs in Neuilly and Passy to accompany him to the station. Rebecca and Hannah would be there as a hindrance to a long investigation—not this time about Jews and descriptions in Josephus, not about books which, to a very little avail, had occupied too many hours; not about fanciful people in a remote age, but a necessary inquiry, tactful yet stern and rigid, about real people, three lovable people, one of them at that very hour hovering over the abyss of death, the other two were a

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mother and son, who had known long years of patient sorrow.

Rebecca and Hannah were quickly set down at a hotel for a few hours of refreshment and repose.

Mr. Ruhlman would allow himself no peace when he heard that Marie was sick. He wanted to start immediately for Rome. He paced up and down the room, looked with sad distress at Harry, and kept repeating, "The poor child, the dear child."

"It was a bogus letter, then?" asked Harry. He had hidden none of the details about David Morton in Madame's letter. He felt sure that Ruhlman wanted a candid recital.

"Yes, a framed-up letter," answered he. "And who do you think wrote it? That drunken tramp who stumbled into the house last winter—Jack McSweeny—who is due for another thrashing, I think." He smiled at the manner in which Harry leaped to his feet and clenched his fists. "But wait a few days. We should lose time hunting for him now."

Then he told Harry a summary of the events that occurred in Boston before they sailed. Samuel Steinberg had stolen thousands of his father's money, and by a more iniquitous effort had endeavored to make Rebecca the wife of Jack McSweeny. They had evidently entered Ruhlman's house for pillage, but got only the letter belonging to Marie.

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"See here, Crawford," Ruhlman drew a chair toward Harry, and looked unflinchingly into his wide-open eyes. "I have known you not quite a year. You have had some opportunity to form a judgment of me. I must leave you to your judgment while I read this letter." He took a stout envelope from his pocket. "This is a copy of a letter which I wrote some years ago. It was intended for Marie's eyes alone. Yet would I have read it to you, as I planned to do, if you had not so suddenly left America this last time. I felt that your interest in Marie, and her regard for you, warranted my confidence in your honor."

Harry blushed at the last part of this unhesitating speech.

"Seeing that the letter was stolen, I had to come to Europe to rescue Marie; and on the steamer I made this copy, as faithfully as I could recall the terms of the former document." Thereupon he read the letter, and as Harry listened, the revelation in the confession proved to him at least that Marie was the daughter of Madame Morton, and that her brother was that soldierly, priestly Henri, worthy of her forever.

"The first draft of this letter, while it is not needed now," Harry had arisen and grasped Ruhlman's hand firmly," must still be in the possession of Jack McSweeny."

"You may be certain of that," answered the other. "He will try to make capital of my own

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acknowledgment of the dealing I had with David Morton."

"Marie must be thankful that you secured her from that wretch!"

There was a pause while the two men rested over a glass of *Vieux Tôtbelle* and their cigars. The silence was consoling, the dimly-lighted room steadied their feelings with strengthening tranquility.

Harry put down his cigar, and avoiding any melodramatic posing, he stood before Ruhlman and began another chapter of the story. "I have a tale to give you that is a glorious ending. I must stand to tell it."

Straightway commencing with his accident in the old court-yard of Issy, he proceeded through the entire relation; the photograph of David Morton, the visit of the mother and son to d'Anters in Claireville, and the relationship that existed between Madame Morton and Sœur Julie; "which makes us see," said Harry, drawing to the close of his long narrative, "that Marie had protection and love from her own cousin in the convent in Nova Scotia."

"What a wonderful book you have written!" was Ruhlman's comment upon this marvelous history of happy coincidences. There was a new light in his eyes; it glimmered through suffused tears. The winter of hidden shame and regretfulness was past. Maytime was upon the world

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and turning into the warmth and fragrance of June. Maytime of a richer worth was in his heart.

"But while we are delaying over our happiness here, others are still in the shadow of sorrow and pain." He arose and started for the door. "We must see Madame Morton. Surely Madame la Marquise will let us come to Marie on the next train."

Harry had grown experienced in counseling. What a school of patient waiting had he been through ever since he started that interminable book of his. He stood in repose at the table and said, "We can not come to Marie till Madame sends for us. Still in her fever, she has not recovered from the brutal shock of McSweeny's letter, and the unkindly statements concerning you. It is clear to you, Mr. Ruhlman, that you ought not to visit her till she grows stronger. And likewise we can not communicate with Madame Morton till Marie is better. Could mountains or seas keep such a mother from the bedside of her suffering child, her long-lost daughter? I will venture to acquaint Henri with some of it, when we pass through Issy this evening. I know something of his power to keep a secret."

"Well, at least, we must send a message to Madame la Marquise. Make out a long telegram, as long as the French government will

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undertake to transmit." Ruhlman spoke with a jubilant tone.

"Your French is French. Mine is half said by my hands," Harry gave the laugh of a happy boy.

"But you are an author," said the other. "You compose the message and I will translate it."

"I have found Marie's lovable mother and her adorable brother: Madame Morton and her son, Henri, and they are cousins of Sœur Julie. This is as certain as the sun, moon, and stars." Harry paused a moment and said. "That ought to be the first item." Then he wrote: "There is no David Morton. A rascal in Boston, named Jack McSweeny, wrote that barbarous letter. He shall feel my hands some fine day, and I will not call Marie's brother Henri to my assistance. Mr. Ruhlman is here, and awaits your word to go to Tivoli. So do I. Please say soon that we are to come down to see Marie again. I will bring her mother and Henri. Tell all this in your own way to our dear invalid."

He pushed the paper toward Ruhlman. "Is there wire enough in France to hold all that?" he asked playfully.

"They shall have it in Tivoli by seven o'clock," replied a clerk in the telegram office.

Harry was watching a clock at that hour in the Chateau. Mr. Ruhlman was with him; Rebecca and Hannah were domiciled for the present

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in the convent of Claireville. He had not thought it necessary to mention them in the telegram.

"It is just seven o'clock," he said brightly to Mr. Ruhlman up in his tower room.

He did not know that Madame was at that very moment standing by Marie's bed; and when the beloved girl looked up after a great invigorating sleep, and smiled at Maxwell, Madame said, almost with a voice of song, "Harry Crawford has written a wonderful book—more wonderful than he ever dreamed to make."

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CHAPTER XV

NO FÊTE CHAMPÊTRE

I

It was late in June before Marie was strong enough to be told about her mother and brother. Madame la Marquise had exercised great skill in doling out the preparatory hints. First the bugaboo of David Morton had to be cremated, and his ashes flung to the winds, over the deep valleys among the mountains in Tivoli. There had once been a David Morton; yes, that was the name of Marie's father; but he had abandoned his darling wife, had stolen away his little daughter, and fortunately Mr. Ruhlman got possession of her, and placed her among loving friends in Nova Scotia.

Having related this much, Madame would rush away pretending to attend to some household duties, but in reality withdrawing, lest a long story would give her patient a setback.

A few days later Marie was able to walk out into the beautiful garden. It was quite close to the ruins of Hadrian's famous villa, and over on another hill she could see the Temple of the Sybils, and a group of tourists moving around its circular base.

"I wish Harry were here," she said to Madame.

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"He ought to see these vestiges of old pagan days, and weave a description of them into his book."

Her face was a shade paler, and somewhat thinner after the long siege of fever and haunting dreams. Yet the effect, as her deep, beautiful eyes prepared to play with Maxwell and Ward, was that of a spiritual vision. The angelic glow upon her face, the delicate tint of her skin, as it lit up to a dim rose-color above the clear warm cheeks, and the heightened refinement and beauty that showed in the firm, graceful lines of her mouth and chin, made a picture which suggested that Marie had walked the empyrean, and rested her head on celestial pillows. The pencil of sweet patience and sorrow could not have done more for her.

"I think Harry would like to see that great cavern of the cascade," she said, after she raced with Maxwell to an orange-tree in the garden. "He might want such a place to use as a prison for villains."

"But my dear, I have told you that Harry Crawford has composed a great story"; Madame felt that Marie was strong enough now to face a great fact.

"And when are we to read it?" she asked. She was listening to Maxwell's voice calling for her to hunt him out in a thick shrubbery.

"When you are ready to listen," answered Madame gaily. "But you must not melt into

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tears when you see his heroine made happier than the best princess in a fairy story."

"To show you that I am ten times stronger that you imagine, Maxwell and I are going to climb to that shepherd on the mountain." Marie pointed beyond Hadrian's villa to a craggy mountain, where in a little stretch of pasture a flock of sheep moved along like a nebulous mist.

"Well, I'll tell you only this much now," Madame started for the gateway, to go down to the little market in Tivoli, and thus avoid possible questions from Marie. "I shall tell you only that Harry Crawford has discovered that you and Sœur Julie are cousins.

Madame was gone. At the railroad station she telegraphed to Harry. "Marie is entirely well again, thank God. Come down with her mother and brother, but wait at our hotel in Rome till we are ready to receive you. I have yet a few days to use upon Marie's story."

She made sure not to give the last and most important announcement till Marie's mother was close at hand; to compel her to wait two or three days to meet her mother might prove disastrous.

"We are here in Rome," Harry telegraphed at a late hour the very next night. "Madame Morton, Henri, and I. Mr. Ruhlman awaits your advice in Claireville."

"Come here in the morning, at about ten

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o'clock," Madame wired back. "Stay near the gateway till Ward brings you in."

It was close to ten o'clock when Madame went out to join Marie and Maxwell in their play at the far end of the garden. Madame had been watching from an upper window, and caught sight of an automobile on a distant valley road. When Harry waved at the corner of the street she sent Ward out with instructions to the visitors.

"Can you postpone this frolic?" she was addressing Marie and Maxwell, as they both stood flushed from the sport, "till I relate another chapter of Harry Crawford's wonderful story?"

"We'll sit here and listen," promptly answered Maxwell, as he drew Marie toward a seat near a pretty boscage.

"Pray, remain standing!" ordered the authoritative story-teller. Then taking Marie's arm, Maxwell holding the other, she said, "Harry Crawford has discovered your mother and brother. See, here he is to tell you."

Marie had not time to indulge in wild cries of surprise or go up the path struggling under a heavy storm of emotion. Madame had made a sign toward the house. Harry Crawford came down the steps like a prince with a great announcement of victory.

Marie dropped Maxwell's hand, and running

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up the pathway, the glad music of her voice crying, "Harry, Harry, Harry!" she rushed into his arms, holding her cheek against his shoulder, as her arm tightened about his neck. Then as Madame and Maxwell approached, Marie drew his joyous face down toward hers and kissed the warm, red blush upon his cheeks.

"There is a bower for lovers down there," Madame was smiling. "Maxwell will show you, if you will allow a third person along."

She knew that Harry would see the chapter through like a masterly author, and she would be standing with Madame Morton and Henri till the signal flashed to raise the curtain.

Madame was sure that she heard Marie say, "You have given me a mother and a brother," and Maxwell, who always came in rightly at the wrong time, added, "And he has given himself, too."

The signal for Madame Morton and Henri came sooner than the hostess expected. Marie was running up the pathway, and was on the porch as her mother reached the door.

The vine-covered porch was left to three happy people for a long half hour. Only the leaves dancing in the sunlight and the stucco columns and wall of the porch caught the enraptured exclamations and the musical phrases of delight.

When Madame la Marquise, with Harry and the two boys, had made a slow detour in the gar-

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den, they tarried near the pretty boscage and began to arrange a table for lunch. Marie, with her arm about her mother and her hand fast in her brother's, walked down a side path toward her devoted friends.

Madame Morton stepped forward, placed her hand on Harry's shoulder and kissed his forehead; then she put her arm about Madame la Marquise and said, as she kissed her, "How shall we thank our merciful God?" Henri put out a brother's hand to Harry, and then drew him into a loving embrace.

"I must be starting for Paris this evening," said the Marquise after lunch. "There are rumors of mischief which concern our little convent in Claireville." And when the others showed their fear by looks and words, she added merrily enough, "But if I get there in time, I'll show the rascals in this French government how to mind their own business."

During the long, pleasant afternoon, while her guests were gone upon a promenade to see the great cascade of Tivoli and the deep valleys full of sulphur springs, Madame kept her maid busy with the preparations for the journey. At first thought she planned to make the trip with only one servant, leaving the two boys with her delighted guests. But later she whispered to Harry, "Perhaps you can sacrifice a little week of this paradise and accompany us. You told me

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that there is a bogus David Morton and a young Jew staying in Paris. They may be active in this new deviltry against the convent, the more so if they are aware that the Jew's sister—what is her name?—Rebecca?—is at the convent."

"I am a blockhead not to have thought of that. I am ready. *Ecco!*" he cried, as he buttoned his light coat and awaited further orders.

Ward, the little bookman, the student from the tower in Claireville, ran up with Maxwell to the house. "Mother," said he, "Marie's brother, Henri, is going to be a priest. He told me as we were climbing up to see the Temple of the Sybils. May I go with him?"

Maxwell, hearing the request, spoke up in his bell-like voice, "I want to be a great author like Harry Crawford. May I write books like his, Mother?

"You may return to Paris with him, if Marie will permit you." And turning to Ward, she said, "You may remain here with Henri till I come back next week. Get him to tell of the long years of study which a priest must go through, and then perhaps go to labor for souls at the end of the world, and die perhaps alone in a wilderness."

"This little house will delight our new family d'Anters. Did you say they are related to the Prince de Condé? Couldn't you guess something like that about Marie?" Madame was in a rush

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of voluble questions, as she proceeded with the preparations for the journey.

"I could see it in the mother's face, and in Henri's," Harry replied.

As they went out to the automobile, Madame and her maid, and Harry with Maxwell, the hearty Marquise said, "I shall send Mr. Ruhlman down at once. We will have the Chateau ready for you all, Marie, in a week or so. Then, if I come back here, as I hope to do with the Marquis, we shall all go to the Vatican and beg the Holy Father's blessing before we sail for America."

II

When the atheistic clique of French politicians some years before were carrying into effect their iniquitous law against the Religious Orders. Madame la Marquise d'Anters prevailed upon "some friends in high places" to have the little convent in Claireville spared from the tyranny of diabolical legislation. The poor nuns were allowed to remain; some of them, at the first hints of the merciless enactments, voluntarily exiled themselves. Some went east and south; two of them went to join Sœur Julie across the ocean, and continue their life of prayer and self-sacrifice among the poor.

The years went on; other officials of the government connived at the privileged condition of

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the Claireville convent. But at length, in whatsoever source it had its origin, a murmur arose against the little group of unoffending nuns. France must stand on its honor and show no favor; other men and women who wore that execrable garb of religion had been cast into the streets, and left to beg their bread. Why should these Claireville women be permitted to live in the lap of luxury, to dwell like an incubus upon the fair land of France, and return nothing, either economically or socially, to the welfare of the people? France must hold an impartial hand, *Messieurs mes compatriotes;* France must maintain her honor and serve all her children alike. The Claireville convent must observe the laws. These women must tear off that hateful garb, abandon their mummeries, and go back into the world to serve our dear France.

Tyranny must be logical.

Suddenly, early in July of the year nineteen hundred fourteen, the fury of the gathering storm was ready to break upon the little convent. But Madame la Marquise d'Anters ingeniously contrived "to procure an umbrella big and safe enough to protect the nuns from the tempest."

During the week preceding the advent of "the bumptious letter," as she termed it, from the *Commissaire* in Paris, she had arranged her impregnable line of defense. With pompous airs,

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more lordly than ever she assumed in the heyday of social splendor at the Chateau d'Anters, she swept into Paris, and taking the full measure of the technicalities of French law, she proceeded to place the convent at Claireville beyond the jurisdiction of the rabid anti-clericals.

She first wrote out an extraordinary announcement which was to appear in all the journals of the capital. "Madame la Marquise d'Anters, noted for her brilliant receptions at the Chateau in Claireville, is engaging in an enterprise which will benefit a number of worthy people. Her husband, M. le Marquis d'Anters, is known from one coast of France to the other for his marvelous success in business affairs. Madame la Marquise, while continuing the splendor of social functions at the Chateau, will soon open a select school, where, along with letters, branches in domestic science will be taught."

"There, let that get around among the old women who make these anti-clerical laws," she said to Harry and the Marquis.

"It will be wiser, I think," proposed the Marquis, "to substitute our American names in place of those titles."

Madame appeared doubtful, but not unyielding.

"If you buy that convent property—as you intend to—I think, when we go to the American Consulate, to present our deeds of purchase, it

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will be of more avail, when opposition comes, to show American names on the document."

"Have your way, Ben Harrington," Susan replied heartily; "have your way, as you have had all our days together."

And the note was reconstructed; Mrs. Ben Harrington was going to engage in an enterprise to help some worthy French women.

None but the necessary authorities knew about the purchase of the convent that very afternoon by Mr. and Mrs. Ben Harrington. A copy of the documentary transfer was left with the First Secretary at the American Consulate.

"We are planning a trip to the States," she volunteered to inform the secretary, "and if any trouble should arise while we are gone, we can refer to this department."

"D'Anters will be sadly missed during the summer," said an old clerk of the Consulate, as they passed to the door.

"Why, how do you do, Mr. Throckmorton!" cried Madame in glad surprise. "Where have you been all these years? Ben, here is Mr. Throckmorton, who has not visited Claireville these five years. Gracious me, my dear! This is Mr. Harry Crawford of Boston, a writer of whom we shall hear."

And for ten minutes one of the ante-chambers off the hallway rang with echoes of an evening long ago at the Chateau d'Anters.

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III

Evidently the announcement in the Paris journals, even after the prominent place it was accorded in *Le Matin* and *Le Petit Journal,* did not strike the attention of some French politicians, or if it did, they disregarded it, and they went ahead to drive the nuns out into the street.

Madame had warned the nuns, after having a telephone installed at the convent, to call the Chateau at the first intimation of alarm. "This is my property now, the property of two Americans, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Harrington. I want to see any officious puppet of an officer dare to intrude upon my premises, as long as decent people are conducting themselves properly. What business is it of the French government what color or style of dress you wear? You may dress in green or in red, white, and blue. You are my servants; this is my house. They will not allow you to work for God according to your rules. Well, they shall allow you to work for me; and you can continue to work for God according to your rules. Go right ahead with your holy lives, my dear Sisters, and do not be shocked at my vehemence, or at my way of meeting the base wretches. I own this house; you graciously condescend to dwell in it. I engage you to do a little work for me—the little classes upon Saturdays and some sewing and lace-work on other

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days; the remainder of the days and hours are for you to live according to your rule of life."

And that was the vehement answer which Mrs. Harrington made to the gendarmes on the following Saturday night. Two officers stood knocking at the convent gate in the name of France. The telephone from the convent announced the news to the Harringtons.

"We shall admit them, if you are willing," the Superioress spoke in a calm voice.

"Wait till we come over," said Susan. And then with a clarion voice she called, "Ben! Harry! The automobile! We are wanted at the convent."

They found the convent gate battered down, and they saw the figures of four men going slowly up the white sand-walk. Two of them wore the capes of gendarmes.

"What means this?" shouted Susan. "Who dares to force an entrance to my grounds and insult my servants?"

The windows in the convent were lighted, and though the curtains were drawn, figures could be discerned moving in the rooms.

"Stand!" commanded Harry Crawford.

"By whose orders?" was the reply from one of the men.

"By the orders of those who possess this property," said Ben Harrington with firm dignity.

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The four men faced the Harringtons and Harry.

"You say this is your property, Madame?" asked one of the gendarmes, his arms folded, and his face set like a machine. "I am sorry. But the Republic commands us; we must turn these occupants," he pointed to the convent, "out upon the street. They must disperse. They have not conformed to the requirements of the State."

"What are the requirements of the State?" Mrs. Harrington stepped forward and stamped her foot for emphasis to her indignation. "Have I a right to engage whatsoever law-abiding people I wish, and let them work for me and dwell in my house? Mr. Harrington!" she was peremptory in every word and gesture, "step into this house and telephone to the American Consul, and ask him if I am violating laws of any country."

Harry Crawford had matter enough to occupy every faculty of his attention without assisting Ben Harrington to usher the officers into the convent parlor. In the dim light from the windows he managed to discern the faces of the men in civilian dress—Jack McSweeny and Samuel Steinberg. He had an old score to settle with them. He could have commanded the gendarmes in the name of the United States to arrest these brigands, these fugitives from the

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law. But Harry wanted to procure a letter from Jack McSweeny's pocket before it should be read in a French police court.

The policemen began to hedge before the proposed appeal to the American Consul. "Gentlemen and Madame," one of them began, "we shall defer action till to-morrow. It is late now for consultation; we shall not disturb these people at this hour."

A pistol shot rang out and re-echoed sharply from the hills.

"The Pirate," whispered Mr. Harrington to Harry. "I asked him to spend this week-end with us at d'Anters. He will be here in a few minutes, when Jacques at the lodge informs him where we are."

"We were not anxious to hasten the process against this place," the officer was speaking again. "But these two gentlemen," pointing to Jack and Steiny, "insisted on the law. They maintain that a girl named Rebecca Steinberg is here in this convent against her father's will. Perhaps she is a postulant, you will say, Gentlemen and Madame. But I reply that it is strictly prohibited to receive postulants and novices. However, Gentlemen and Madame, we shall withdraw and await the orders of the Republic to-morrow."

"You shall await the orders of the Republic now," Harry spoke sternly, and pinched Ben

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Harrington's arm. He whispered to Madame, feeling sure that the gendarmes could not understand English. "Make them enter the convent, and detain them till I attend to these two wretches."

Mr. Harrington began to lead the way. The gendarmes protested. "Assuredly, Gentlemen and Madame, it will be better to wait till to-morrow."

"Your chief, the chief of your bureau, shall hear of this from the American Ambassador's office, if you refuse our righteous request." Ben Harrington put his threat forward in a stern voice.

The officers went along; Jack and Steiny, divining the indignation that showed on Harry Crawford's face, kept close to the elbow of the gendarmes.

"Only the officers enter," said Harry. And as the door closed, he turned and tried to grasp Jack McSweeny by the throat. But he lost his footing. Jack and Steiny leaped across the lawn toward the broken gateway.

"Shiver my timbers," cried a voice on the road. "What wild marauders are scurrying on the dark seas to-night?"

"Catch one of them!" shouted Harry.

Quick upon his cry, the Pirate jumped to the gate, shot out his foot, and tripped Steiny into a deep gutter.

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"Hold him!" called Harry, as he sped after Jack McSweeny.

The Pirate threw his weight upon Steiny, and then, raising his head to a grassy mound, he said, "What's the matter with your nose? It's hanging on sideways to your face."

Steiny was bleeding fiercely at the mouth. Two of his teeth were broken. The Pirate lifted the head and put a handkerchief against a gash over Steiny's left eye. "Just be patient for a few minutes and you can have a wash. Don't attempt to get up or I'll fetch you a blow that will keep you seasick for a week. Here they come now."

Jack McSweeny, just as Harry was about to close in upon him at the turn in the road, dodged quickly, swung about, and dashed back over the road. In wild desperation he tried to reach the convent yard again and shout for protection. Harry clapped one firm hand on him just as he jumped to the gateway. Jack was almost thrown down by the impact. He shook himself free, and then crying, "Stand off!" he pretended to reach for a revolver in his back pocket. Harry did not hesitate to disobey the order. He sprang at the quivering Jack, and with the full force of his tightened fist dealt him such a blow on the jaw that Jack's head twisted full around and the joint of the jawbone clicked. Down went Jack in a heap like an ox in the shambles.

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"Man overboard!" called the Pirate.

Harry was searching Jack McSweeny's pockets. By the light of a few matches he readily discovered, among the mass of papers, the letter which had been stolen from Marie's desk in the Ruhlman house.

"Now let us stand these fellows up and march them along to the policemen at the convent."

The Pirate had no difficulty in making Steiny obey orders.

"That fellow whom you have," said Harry, "stole thousands of dollars from his father. This fellow," he lifted Jack McSweeny to his feet, "this fellow made a worse robbery. But his wings are clipped now."

By the time Harry and the Pirate succeeded in bringing the two battered culprits to the convent steps a small group of villagers had gathered at the gateway.

"These two fellows," Harry was whispering to the officers when they came out, "are wanted on the charge of stealing. This fellow, Samuel Steinberg, stole seven thousand dollars, about thirty-five thousand francs, from his father."

"You vouch for this solemnly?" inquired one of the gendarmes.

"You have us as witnesses," replied Ben Harrington.

A set of manacles bound Jack and Steiny to-

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gether. The officers started down the little white path.

"What's this! What's this!" exclaimed Mrs. Harrington.

They looked and saw the group of villagers coming silently in at the gateway. A lantern, which one of them carried, showed that they were supporting a feeble old man.

Harry and Ben Harrington went down to meet them. Crawford almost shouted his surprise as he recognized the decrepit figure. It was old Steinberg.

"Rebecca must have told her father where she is living—here in the convent," whispered Harry to Mr. Harrington.

"She did write to him a few weeks ago to tell him that she was happy here, and would always pray for him," answered Mrs. Harrington, who had come down the pathway.

"You have another witness here," said Harry a moment later to the gendarmes. "Here is Steinberg's father. He evidently did not know the son's address and came seeking his daughter."

"We found this man lying almost dead in a narrow alley near the station," one of the men was giving the narrative to Madame la Marquise d'Anters. "We brought him back to consciousness, and tried to keep him in the house of the good Jean Durand and his good wife. But the old man would not permit us to hold him. He

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speaks little French, and we could only make out that he wanted to die near his daughter. So he said, and—God have mercy!—though we felt that it was death to bring him, we wanted him to have his dying wish. God have mercy! And, Madame la Marquise, the old man is a hard one; he must have been a stern, proud-willed man in his day, to walk this way, dying, up this road. If we tried to make him rest he would crawl along, he said. Yes, Madame la Marquise, the old Monsieur must have had a strong will in his day."

In the glare of the light old Steinberg lifted his head and scanned the faces before him. "Rebecca, Rebecca," he gasped.

Mr. Harrington ran back to the convent to summon Rebecca, trying not to alarm the nuns with his message.

"Here is your son," said one of the officers in a heartless tone, pointing to Steiny.

The old man lifted his eyes with great difficulty. In the glare of the lamp he saw his son and Jack McSweeny standing close together. "There they are," he said in a choking cry. "They robbed me to-night as I came from the train,—down there—as I came to find my Rebecca. They beat me," his head sank, and his knees were on the ground, "and they left me dying under a wall." Then trying to raise himself, he coughed till blood came. "They think they are to have my property; but I say no. It is

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all made over to Rebecca." He coughed again, and in the violent effort to ease himself he fell out of the arms that supported him and dropped exhausted on the ground.

IV

Madame la Marquise d'Anters made a short speech of thanks to the villagers before they went down the road after the officers and their prisoners. The men had gently lifted old Steinberg into the automobile. Mrs. Harrington at the telephone in the convent had summoned the doctor to the porter's lodge at the Chateau.

And there before the gray dawn crept in at the windows old Steinberg died. Rebecca's arms were about him till the end.

Harry Crawford insisted on remaining the entire night with Rebecca and the nurse. Once during the long stillness the old man through his dim eyes seemed to recognize the young author, the student of prophecies and of the history of Jerusalem. In a husky voice, through his heavy beard, he muttered, "Jerusalem is fallen. The temple is flat to the ground."

As death closed on his long, sad life, Rebecca caught the last whispered words, "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!"

V

Harry Crawford, three days later, was hurried away to Rome, by the orders of Mrs. Ben Harrington.

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"We are no longer Marquis and Marquise, Comte and Vicomte," she said merrily to Maxwell, while Harry was packing up a few bits of linen for the journey. "Marie's mother is really and truly a d'Anters, and Marie is of the House d'Anters."

"You must tell them," she was loading Harry with a hundred messages during the lunch hour, "you will tell Marie and her mother and Henri that when we received our patent in Italy some years ago we looked in an old list of French names, and finding that nobody held the name d'Anters, we selected it."

Then glancing at a memorandum, she went on, "And here is a note to the Cardinal Vicar of Rome. He allows us to send people who wish to see the Holy Father. I want Marie and all of you to come from Rome with a blessing from our beloved Holy Father."

The other items of the memorandum were noted and set down for Harry.

"You will prevail on Marie's mother to come with us to America. Marie must take her to see Sœur Julie in Nova Scotia."

Harry was waving to Maxwell as the car sped out by the porter's lodge.

VI

All Europe was in a wild ferment when the party returned to Claireville. Ever since that

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late day in June, when the Archduke Francis Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajévo, the high officials in State departments knew that the air was growing tenser and ominous clouds were lowering over every horizon. Toward the end of July every little journalist in the world was waiting for the reply of Servia to a note from the Austro-Hungarian government. Germany was speaking emphatically to Russia; mobilization was a word upon the lips of every man in the street.

Mr. Ruhlman bought an English paper as soon as he reached Paris. He was sitting near Harry as he read, "The German road to St. Petersburg lies through Paris. Shall England be able to stand silently by and see her allies attacked?"

"You remember last autumn," he said to Harry. "I was willing to prophesy that, even in the very noonday of talk about peace and disarmament, we could expect a terrible war."

"I remember," Harry replied. "I realize more fully now that these apostles of peace were but half-serious. They did not admit to their counsels a representative from that Ambassador of Peace whom we saw the other day in the Vatican."

"You have gone up a long road, as I knew you would—indeed, as I said you would, when you first approached me with your study about the divinity of Christ." Ruhlman looked direct at Harry. "You admit, I feel, the claims of Rome."

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"How can I deny them and be rational?" answered Harry. "These are the words of Christ—'Thou art Peter; to thee I give the keys; feed My sheep; whatsoever thou shalt bind, shall be bound.' But I have much to learn. I have Henri Morton to thank for thoughts of the past few days."

"We may continue our studies this winter," said Ruhlman, with an inviting tone and look. "I went on a visit to your friend at Holy Cross after you left Boston."

Harry smiled knowingly. "And you have stolen a march on me, and gone ahead on the long road."

"The Father at Holy Cross—you will take no offence, I am sure—knows a great deal about your present convictions. I took the liberty to tell him."

Harry had nothing to say.

"And if you will pardon my further gossip with him, I hinted that Marie might go with you to see him."

Harry was blushing like a bashful child.

The environs of the Chateau, even while hot whispers of war were scorching the ears of Europe, still maintained a nook for the romantic feelings of a young lover.

Ruhlman catered to them for another minute. "I am not a matchmaker, Harry. But with half an eye I can read one page of fortune. I have been speaking with Marie, and know." He un-

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folded a copy of the London *Times*, and began to read an editorial on the war.

Marie came running up to the two men in the shade of the larches. "How solemn you both look," she laughed merrily. "Has the war reached the fort at Issy, that you both refuse to say good-morning?"

"I must go to Mr. Harrington to show him England's tremulous heart in this editorial." Ruhlman stood and smiled at the two young lovers. Then, with delight in his eyes, he said, as he moved away, "God bless you both."

VII

"Maxwell, dear, your father has gone to secure places for us on the boat which leaves Boulogne to-night." Madame was never busier—never! As young Susan Glynn Harrington in New Jersey long ago she started out upon a career of thrifty ambitions. The years had seen fortune and success and honor come to the Harringtons and to the Chateau d'Anters; they had kept Susan's heart and hands busily engaged. But never before had she "such a volcano of hustle and haste."

"Mr. Throckmorton, of the Consulate, sent us word that as we intended to go to America, we had better depart at once." She gave ten orders to five servants, and then threw her arm about Maxwell's neck.

"And shall we not have the great *fête-cham-*

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pêtre?" asked he. "We are not going in a blaze of glory from Claireville?"

"If the boat will accommodate us, we'll hold our celebration on it—a trailing light of glory till we pass Finistère."

Rebecca and Hannah were helping at the pile of trunks and satchels. Madame d'Anters Morton was at the convent announcing to the nuns the plans of good Mrs. Harrington.

"The French government will need the nuns in a very few weeks," she had said to Madame Morton. "The convent will probably be employed as a hospital, as it was in the Franco-Prussian War."

Henri and Ward returned from a visit to a priest at Vaugirard College, and in breathless haste were describing the scenes of excitement which they witnessed at the Porte de Versailles.

"I spoke with an old Jesuit at the college," Henri was telling his mother and Mrs. Harrington, as they continued to fold dresses and place them in the trunks. "And he has given me a letter to one of the Fathers at Holy Cross. I am to study English literature and the sciences there next year. And I think that Harry Crawford is acquainted with the Father professor, for I have heard him mention the name."

"And there is a preparatory school in Boston which I am to attend," said Ward, as he held a bulky bundle for his mother.

"The dear old Pirate is to remain here and look

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after our interests in Claireville." Madame found time, between her directions to the servants, to speak a word to others. "Mr. Throckmorton has our passports ready, and he will come here with Ben for lunch." To Henri she said, "I will not allow Marie to assist us in this work. I sent her out to take a good long look at the gardens with Harry Crawford."

Five minutes later a servant announced that lunch was ready. Mr. Harrington and Mr. Throckmorton were listening to an editorial from the London *Times* of the third of August. Mr. Ruhlman was reading aloud: "The die is cast. The great European struggle has begun. Germany declared war upon Russia on Saturday evening, and yesterday her troops entered Luxembourg and crossed the French frontier in Lorraine. It is idle to dwell upon events such as these. . . . They mean that Europe is to be the scene of the most terrible war that she has witnessed since the fall of the Roman Empire. The losses in human life and in the accumulated wealth of generations which such a contest must involve are frightful to think on."

"Harry Crawford may put some of it in his book," broke in little Maxwell, who ran panting to the porch to see "a great man from the Consulate."

"Let us take a long farewell of the garden and the dear old towers and the sunny, playful glasshouse," Mrs. Harrington gave a gesture of com-

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mand to her little army. "We shall start back with you, Mr. Throckmorton, immediately after lunch."

"I must hurry back," said he. "We shall have busy days and nights at the office."

"Forward!" came the order from the past grandmistress of ceremonies at the Chateau d'Anters. She took Madame Morton's arm and led the way.

Henri and Ward followed with Rebecca, and Maxwell was aloft on the Pirate's shoulders. Ruhlman, Harrington, and Throckmorton formed a slow squad acting as rear guard.

Marie was in Harry's arms standing in the shade of the drooping larches as the two women in the van of the army came round the turn of the pathway.

"The House d'Anters has been taken," called out the laughing voice of the mistress-general.

Marie, holding Harry by the arm, came down to surrender.

"God bless you both!" The good heart of Susan Glynn Harrington was in her words.

Marie ran to her mother's arms, trying to laugh through her tears, as she whispered to Henri. "Harry Crawford is to be your brother."

"Heave, ho! My hearties!" shouted the Pirate. "Full sails and a flowing sea to you, and the prayers of an old sea-dog go with you!"

"And the best of books is written," said Max-

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well cheerily, as he leaped down and ran to take Harry Crawford's hand.

VIII

The tugboat had taken the d'Anters—Mortons and Harringtons—with Rebecca and Ruhlman and Harry and the servants out from Boulogne and put them safely aboard the great steamer. The shimmer of light from the French coast followed them as the ocean liner moved on under the silent stars to the west.

The happy party, in a close group, was seated in a sheltered corner of the port side of the ship. Hannah, at a little distance, was regaling her heart with a little snatch of a quaint Irish melody, singing in a low voice:

"Fare thee well, Enniskillen,
Fare thee well for a while,
All around the border
Of Erin's green isle;
And when the war is over
We'll return in full bloom. . . ."

Maxwell ran down the deck to Marie and whispered, "Hannah is singing that when the war is over we'll return in full bloom."

PRINTED BY BENZIGER BROTHERS, NEW YORK.

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